APRIL 1987

AUSTRALIAN

PLAYBOY

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AUSSIE RULES
OUR FORECASTS FOR THE SEASON

PAM BURRIDGE MAKES WAVES

THE COLBYS' SUPERBITCH

PLAYBOY INTERVIEW
SURPRISING RIFFS FROM LIONEL RICHIE

STEPHANIE BEACHAM STRIPS OFF

PILLOW WARS
HOW WOMEN FLOP IN BED

OCKER CHIC
WHY THE WORLD LOVES US

SENSATIONAL PICTORIAL
A CHORUS LINE'S JANET JONES

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LEO BURNETT PMLP0605 CC2244/85

PLAYBILL

April already and the first whiff of winter is in the air. You can count on this issue of Australian PLAYBOY to add some sizzle to dull old days.

We start turning up the heat with a bevy of beautiful pictorials, including two sensational actresses, Stephanie Beacham and Janet Jones. The divine Miss Beacham stars as superbitch Sable in the TV supersoap *The Colbys* and her pictorial consists of a portfolio of shots by **Douglas Kirkland** and **Patrick Lichfield**. The jazzy Miss Jones starred in *A Chorus Line* and *The Flamingo Kid* and her high-steppin' pictorial was snapped by **Steve Wayda**.

The heat is also going to be on this season when teams from Queensland and Western Australia join the Aussie rules comp. Veteran Aussie rules watcher **Garrie Hutchinson** joined our team to compile *Playboy's Aussie Rules Preview*. Don't miss his spot-on forecasts of who's hot and who's not on the field for 1987.

One thing's for sure, Lionel Richie's as hot as they come. We sent **Glenn Plaskin** to jive with Richie on such subjects as breaking away, singing all the way to the bank and, yeah, dancing on the ceiling, for the Playboy Interview. Pam Burridge is not exactly luke-warm, either. **John Elliss** tracked down Australia's top woman surfer for our popular 20 Questions section.

You've all seen the scare headlines, the magazine covers, the ads for TV specials blaring out yet another message of impending doom. If it's not AIDS, it's crack, herpes, sunburn or salt; by Thursday, you're scared to death of something you'd never heard of on Monday. In *Crisisweek*, **Peter Moore** examines the way the media sell hysteria, and **Paul Dickson** presents *A Guide To Crisis Journalese*, a glossary of the hypesters' hottest hits.

And speaking of lexicons, **Michael Thomas** looks at the g'day syndrome that has conquered the rest of the world but is fast becoming extinct here in Australia. His *The Decline And Fall Of Ocker Chic*, illustrated by **Robert Giusti**, is a nostalgic tribute to our stone-the-crows, ripper-bloody-bewdy image. Another LA beer and a slice of quiche, anyone?

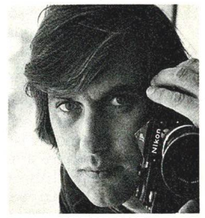
We may be a nation of light ale drinkers but thank Christ we still have proper wine to get stuck into. And **Richard Beckett**'s guide to starting a wine cellar is crammed with tips on the best put-downs. Thanks to **Frants Kantor** for the artwork.

Herpes And The Chaplain, this month's piece of fiction, doesn't sound too jolly but, trust us, you'll laugh at the ingenuity of this jail yarn by **Lew Steiger** with artwork by **Dave Calver**. And don't overlook another short story in April Australian PLAYBOY. It's *Getting Enough* by **Chet Williamson**. The tale was inspired by a visit from a salesman but we're not about to tell you what the guy was pitching! The illustration is from **Olivia De Berardinis.**

You say you're *not* getting enough? Maybe you've been spending too much time around the dames **Asa Baber** describes in his Men column: the Cliff Dweller, the Statistician, the Fastest Douche In The West and their frosty female friends! If so, cheer yourself right up by getting acquainted with Miss April, Chantal Aarts. One look will reveal why we've called her spread *Fine Aarts*. Don't neglect, either, to check out London actress Marina Baker who appears in *Great Briton*, a pictorial shot by **Ron Newman**.

Motoring editor **Rob Luck** presents *Supersaab* and he warns not to be fooled by the mild-mannered looks of the SAAB 9000 sedan. In the Sport column, **Steve Bunk** cautions you not to regard fencing as a prissy pastime for guys in tight white pants and, on our Dear Girls Of Playboy page, six of our most popular ladies reveal whether or not they think women brag about their conquests.

Where to start? That decision's up to you. One thing's for sure, you'll have a ball this April with Australian PLAYBOY to keep you company.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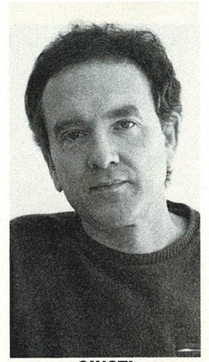
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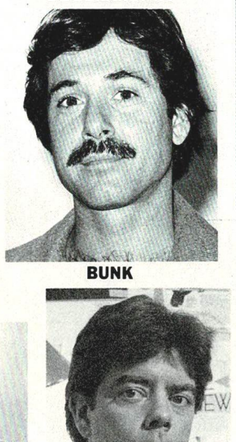
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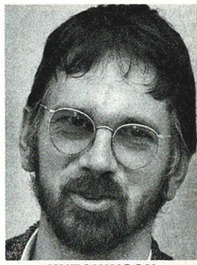
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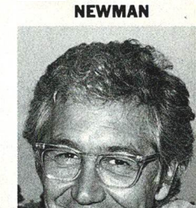
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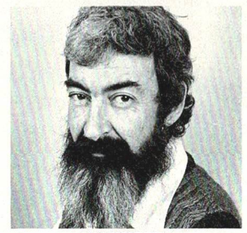
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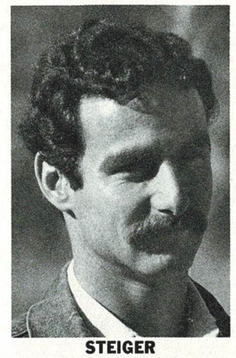
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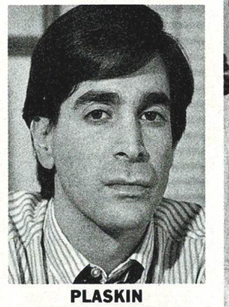
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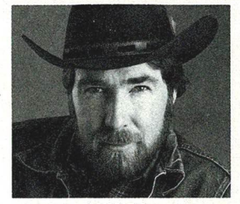
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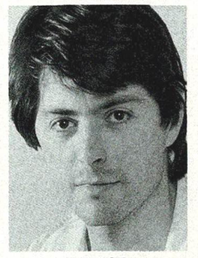
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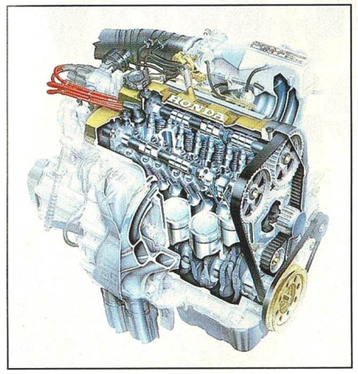

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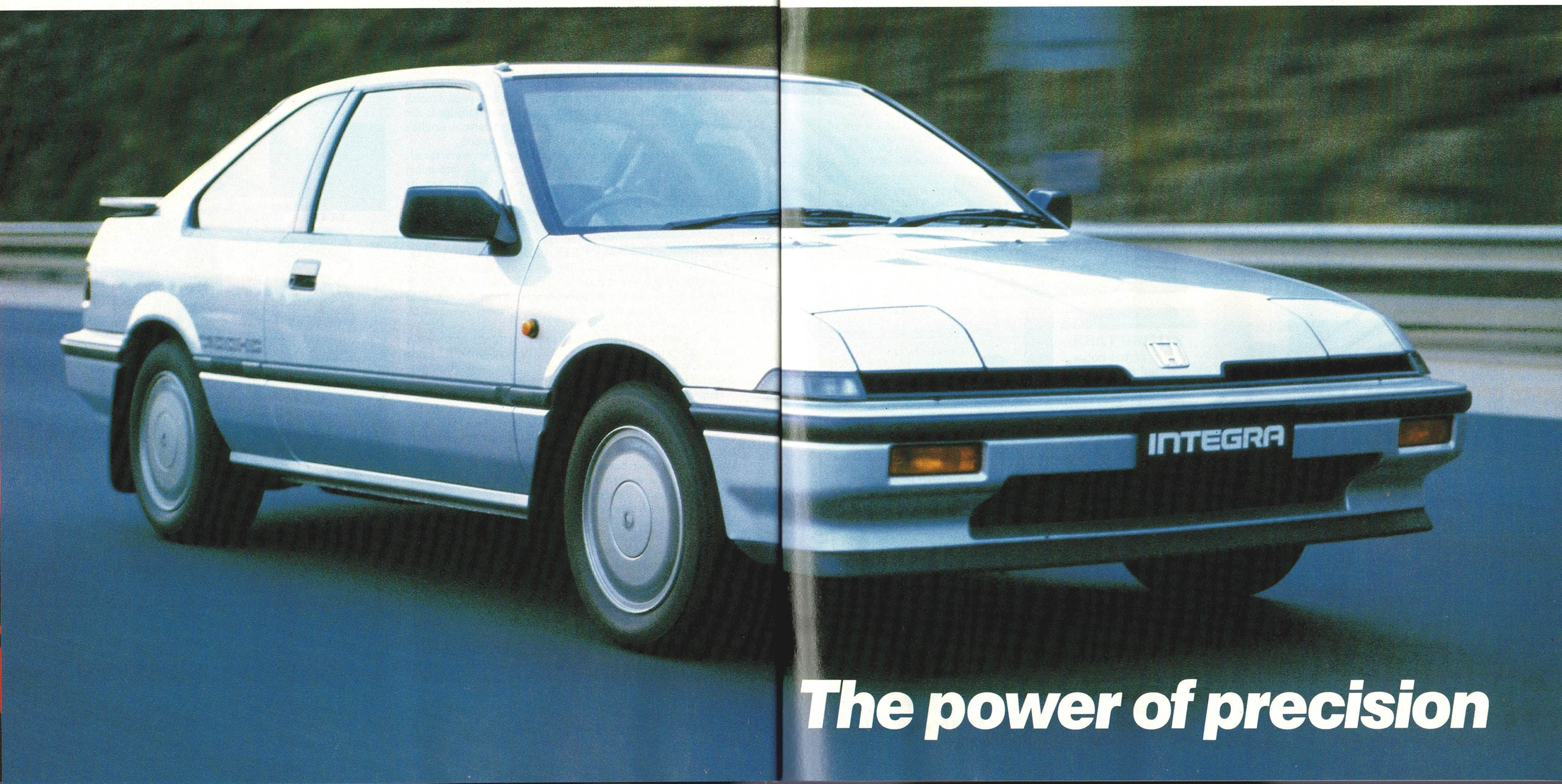

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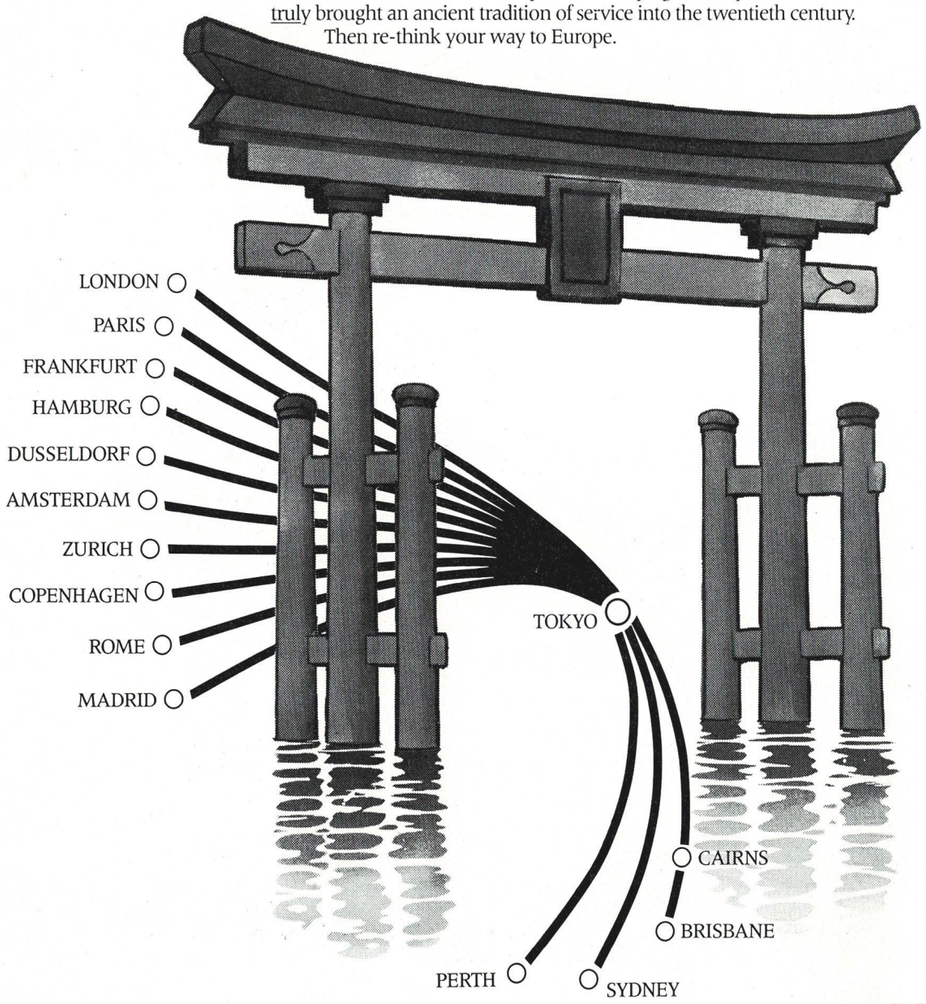

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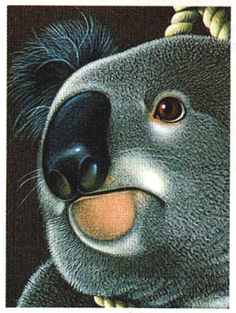
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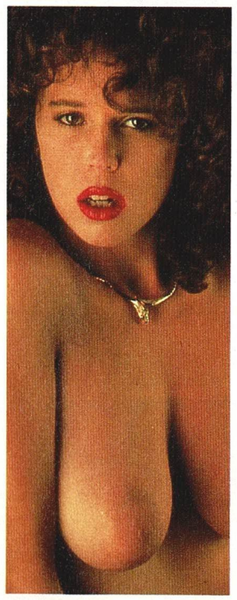
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DEAR PLAYBOY

Address your letters to Dear Playboy, PO Box 746, Darlinghurst 2010.

HAD HIS PHIL

Collins has had his phil (sic) of problems about his nice guy image so full marks to you, Australian PLAYBOY, for letting him have his say in the November issue. He comes across as a totally sincere guy — just the way he relates to his audiences, too. Those gentle songs of his really sum up the tenderness and romance that we all wish we had in our lives. A good interview, David Sheff.

Sally P.,
Arncliffe, NSW.

DRAGON SLAYER

I acquired the January issue to vote for the Playmate Of The Year thinking it would be a clear-cut decision. Oh boy, was I wrong! I could hardly contain myself when I saw Miss December, Donna Edmondson. She's everything one could desire in a woman except. . . she's a horse!

Later on I looked at the 12 Playmates again and found you'd presented no less than six *dragons*! So now I have to vote for those six as well as I must have a chance of a date with a dragon lady! In fact, you just don't know what I'd be prepared to go through for just one night with a dragon.

Geoffrey Scott-Jeffries,
Cowandilla, SA.

Horses? Dragons? For those readers who think Geoffrey could use a good eye doctor, he is, in fact, referring to the Chinese animal zodiac which works on a 12-year lunar cycle. Meanwhile our favorite filly, Donna Edmondson, can carry us off into the sunset any old time she likes! — Ed.

ASTRAL SEX

After reading Susan Kurosawa's Women column on star signs in the December issue, I've been on the lookout for a hot Scorpio lady. Now I think Susan must have been lying because of all the contenders for Playmate Of The Year there's not a single Scorpio among them! And they are the 12 hottest women ever assembled in one place at one time! And *four* of them are Aquarius!

According to Susan, Aquarius dames are the sort who are unpredictable enough to demand oral sex at the traffic lights! You'll know where I'll be parked, Regina, Jakki, Natalie and Donna, if you need me in a hurry!

Big Dave,
Port Kembla, NSW.

WHAT ONE WOMAN GOT

Congratulations on your *What Women Want* article in December Australian PLAYBOY. For the first time I found Christmas shopping for my wife a pleasurable experience and she really enjoyed the frivolous non-necessities she received on Christmas Day.

Peter Martella,
Grovedale, Vic.

BIG SWINGER

It's been three days since I first picked up a copy of your February issue and I'm only just beginning to recover from the shock of seeing Becky LeBeau. What a woman! More, please.

S.D.,
Berala, NSW.

How does Becky LeBeau manage to stand up straight? Those wonderful breasts of hers must surely defy gravity.

L.J.,
Roma, Qld.

Is it too much to ask to see Becky LeBeau again on the Dear Playboy page? I realise you may have to use up the whole page to accommodate a picture (boy, is she well endowed!) but I think it would be worth it.

K.P.,
Mt Gambier, SA.

By the wonders of modern printing we've managed to reduce Becky for this pint-sized peek — Ed.

PRIME PROPERTY

Memo to Miss December, Donna Edmondson, real estate agent: You have great frontage and beautiful views.

B. Richardson,
Blackwater, Qld.

Not to mention charm, character and immaculate condition! — Ed.

GREAT LINES

Thanks for a nice piece of fiction in the February issue. Roald Dahl's *The Bookseller* is in the best traditions of the master's *Tales Of The Unexpected.*

But more to the point, I have to say the illustration is one of the best pieces of artwork I've ever seen in the magazine. In fact it's been quite a month for your artists. I found those zippy pics that accompanied Rob Luck's intriguing automotive crystal ball gazing quite outstanding as well.

G.G.,
Salisbury, SA.

LIKE, COOL, MAN

C'mon, Mel Green! What are you on about in *The Art Of Being Cool* (December)? I looked it up in the *book* and, quote, CD, EP, spicy and orgasmic, unquote, are all listed under RFU (really fuckin' uncool, to you).

Catch up!

Oh yeah, where can I plastic a pair of those real winner sunglasses they show you wearing?

Steve Starr,
Paddington, Qld.

Same place you bought that book, Steve — Ed.

JOHNSON AND MONROE

I began reading your interview with Don Johnson in February Australian PLAYBOY quite prepared to dislike the subject intensely on the strength of what I have seen of him in *Miami Vice* and read of him in the press. I ended up enthralled, and while I still think Johnson *was* a prize pain in the arse at one time, it is clear the ordeal of drugs and booze and high living managed to mature him in the nick of time, probably, to save his life.

But looking at the fascinating tribute to Marilyn Monroe, all those wonderful previously unpublished photos of an ever-so slightly plump sex symbol years before she became a true screen goddess, I was filled with overwhelming sadness. What sheer waste that a great talent should be cut down by the very drug she used as a crutch to protect her from the rigors of modern life.

Even though those black and white shots have a lovely period feel about them, it is still hard to believe that Marilyn has been dead for almost 25 years. Her incandescent quality shines out of the Sweetheart Of The Month picture from PLAYBOY's first issue and the cover she posed for.

Sam P.,
Ulladulla, NSW.

Write to us! Send your letters to the above address, and remember, we'll give preference to letters that keep it short and snappy. We'll give a 12 month subscription for each Dear Playboy letter we publish.

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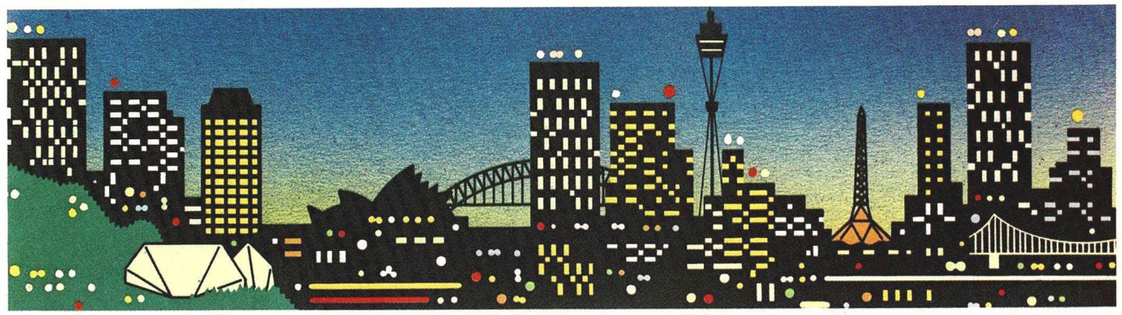
PLAYBOY AFTER HOURS



ANOTHER WIN FOR THE BOXING KANGAROO

Not all the drama of the America's Cup took place on the water. We understand that a member of one of the crews, described as a "rope-jockey", managed to knock over a kangaroo on the road from Perth to Adelaide. Assuming it was dead, he dressed it in his Gucci blazer (anything for a laugh!), and was just about to take its photograph when the beast recovered, knocked him out with a blow from its tail and vanished into the bush with his passport, $2000 and 16 credit cards.

It wasn't recorded which team the gentleman in question belonged to but we wager they didn't win.

THANK GOD FOR THE LONDON BOBBY

A recent court case in England revealed that a police constable had observed the accused filling a number of small plastic bags with shreds of cut grass left by a mower in London's St James's Park. He then stopped a couple of tourists and offered them the packed grass as cannabis.

When they refused to buy, he began to shout at them, saying they were old-fashioned and badly dressed. As the couple were Japanese they did not understand him, nor the reason the constable subsequently arrested him.

So that's why they call it dope.

GIVING 'EM CURRY

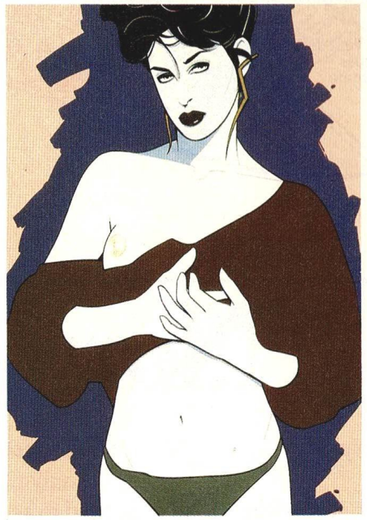
The more our spies from around the world report to us about breakdowns in communication, the more we appreciate good old Telecom. Mr Ram Llagat, manager of the New Delhi Central Exchange, recently made public his concern for the welfare of the telephone system on the Indian subcontinent.

"Few would deny," he declared, "that, like similar systems, our national telephone system develops occasional faults. But the present disturbances are due to the behavior of Mr Prakash Chand, the Minister of Law and Order.

"After failing to get through to his wife, Mr Chand came into the exchange purple-faced with rage and brandishing a revolver. He screamed for the manager and, when I appeared, he grabbed me and ripped the lapels off my jacket. Then he strode up and down the ranks of our 500 'Hello' girls, calling them all the names on earth. Finally, beside himself with rage, he fell to the floor gnashing his teeth and foaming at the mouth.

"At this point the 'Hello' girls went on strike, pulled out their plugs and the city fell silent. Mr Chand was helped from the building by members of his staff, and two hours later the army arrived."

We doubt if even Paul Keating would behave like that, never mind Michael Duffy, our Minister for Communications, but in the unlikely event that one of them did, it is to be hoped the Australian Army would be on the scene a bit quicker to deal with them.



GO WITH THE FLOW

At a recent Ozzy Osbourne concert, the photographers' pit was sandbagged with Kitty Litter. Promoters had provided festival seating — no assigned seats — and fans would do almost anything to keep from losing their possies near the stage, even if it meant, er, powdering their noses in public.

Fortunately the absorbent Kitty Litter effectively stopped the resulting downhill flow before it reached the stage. We wonder whether Ozzy has considered toilet training his fans.

WHAT A GAS

Far be it from us to perpetuate yet another urban myth but a suburban newspaper recently published one which we found too good to resist.

Apparently a local ratepayer had complained to the gas company about the size of his bill. A spokesman for the company commented that the bill might have been somewhat high for the time of year, but they suspected the consumer might have been charged for gas used up during the explosion which blew his house to pieces.

We just hope they remembered to charge him for replacing the pipes.

MYTH-INFORMED

Urban myths may be outrageous, but at least they're very difficult to disprove. But how about this correction run by a metropolitan newspaper?

"An article in yesterday's edition incorrectly reported that a university newspaper had headlined a story about the killing of a student on campus on the eve of weekend visits by prospective students. There was no killing and the student newspaper did not have such a headline."

Apart from those minor details, we are reliably informed that the rest of these truly shocking revelations were all true.

BAREFACED IN THE PARK

And here's yet another tale of rampant weak-kneed liberalism destroying the fabric of our society. A botanist was arrested in New York's Central Park for conducting walking tours during which he showed the folks which plants were edible, demonstrating this fact every now and again with a quick munch.

Unable to find anything more specific to charge him with except "criminal mischief", the Parks and Recreation Department eventually settled for hiring him to conduct tours under their guidelines. Once again, justice breaks down and a dangerous vegetarian is allowed to run amok.

F-111 cutaway

1 Hinged nose cone
2 Attack radar
3 Terrain-following radar
4 Nose hinges (2)
5 Radar mounting
6 Nose lock
7 Angle-of-sideslip probe
8 Homing antenna (high)
9 Forward warning antenna
10 Homing antenna (low and mid)
11 ALR-41 antenna
12 Flight control computers
13 Feel and trim assembly
14 Forward avionics bay
15 Angle-of-attack probe
16 UHF Comm/Tacan No 2
17 Module forward bulkhead and stabilization flaps (2)
18 Twin nosewheels
19 Shock strut
20 Underfloor impact attenuation bag stowage (4)
21 Nosewheel well
22 LOX converter
23 Rudder pedals
24 Control column
25 LOX heat exchanger
26 Auxiliary flotation bag pressure bottle
27 Weapons sight
28 Forward parachute bridle line
29 De-fog nozzle
30 Windscreen
31 Starboard console
32 Emergency oxygen bottle
33 Crew seats
34 Bulkhead console
35 Wing sweep control handle
36 Recovery chute catapult
37 Provision/survival pack
38 Attenuation bags pressure bottle
39 Recovery chute
40 Aft parachute bridle line
41 UHF
42 Stabilization-brake chute
43 Self-righting bag
44 UHF
45 ECM antennae (port and starboard)
46 Forward fuselage fuel bay (2,340 Imp gal/10,638 litres)
47 Ground refuelling receptacle
48 Weapons bay
49 Module pitch flaps (port and starboard)
50 Aft flotation bag stowage
51 Air refuelling receptacle
52 Primary heat-exchanger (air-to-water)
53 Ram air inlet
54 Rate gyros
55 Rotating glove
56 Inlet variable spike
57 Port intake
58 Air brake/undercarriage door
59 Auxiliary inlet blow-in doors
60 Rotating glove pivot point
61 Inlet vortex generators
62 Wing sweep pivot
63 Wing centre-box assembly
64 Wing sweep actuator
65 Wing sweep feedback
66 Control runs
67 Rotating glove drive set
68 Inboard pivot pylons (2)
69 Auxiliary drop tanks (500 Imp gal/2,273 litres)
70 Outboard fixed pylon (subsonic/jettisonable)
71 Slat drive set
72 Wing fuel tank (324 Imp gal/1,473 litres)
73 Leading-edge slat
74 Starboard navigation light
75 Flap drive set
76 Outboard spoiler actuator
77 Starboard spoilers
78 Inboard spoiler actuator
79 Flaps
80 Wing swept position
81 Auxiliary flap
82 Auxiliary flap actuator
83 Nuclear weapons and weapons control equipment package
84 Wing sweep/Hi Lift control box
85 Flap, slat and glove drive mechanism
86 Starboard engine bay
87 Yaw feel spring
88 Roll feel spring
89 Yaw trim actuator
90 Yaw damper servo
91 Roll stick position transducer
92 Pitch trim actuator (manual)
93 Roll damper servo
94 Pitch trim actuator (series)
95 Pitch feel spring
96 Pitch-roll mixer
97 Pitch damper servo
98 Pitch stick position transducer
99 Aft fuselage frames
100 Aft fuselage fuel bays (1,191 Imp gal/5,413 litres)
101 Horizontal stabilizer servo actuator
102 Starboard horizontal stabilizer
103 Aft warning antennae
104 HF antenna
105 Detector scanner
106 X-Band radar
107 Rudder
108 Integral vent tank
109 Fin aft spar
110 Fin structure
111 Fin/fuselage attachment
112 Rudder servo actuator
113 Variable nozzle
114 Tailfeathers
115 ECM antenna
116 ALR-41 antenna
117 Horizontal stabilizer structure
118 Horizontal stabilizer servo actuator
119 Free floating blow-in doors
120 Afterburner section
121 Horizontal stabilizer servo actuator
122 Wing swept position
123 UHF
124 Ventral fin
125 Fire detection sensing element loops
126 Cross frames
127 Engine access hatches
128 Engine accessories
129 Pratt & Whitney TF30 turbofan
130 Three-stage fan
131 Intake duct
132 Fire extinguishing agent container and nozzles
133 Wing box skinning
134 Port mainwheel
135 Auxiliary drop tanks
136 Pivot pylon
137 Pivot point
138 Pivot actuator
139 Flap racks
140 Fixed pylon strong point
141 Outboard fixed jettisonable pylon
142 Wing integral fuel
143 Wing box structure
144 Port navigation light

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WOMEN

The only problem with being 16 and horny as hell is your hormones work better than your brain.

I don't think I have any friends who aren't virgins," said Alan.

"Most — well, a lot — of my friends aren't virgins," said Evan.

"You hang out with older guys," said Mark.

"At this age of sexual inexperience, the most attractive aspect of a girl is willingness," continued Alan.

I was naturally agog, but then they broke off talking to contort their hands. Sixteen-year-old boys do a lot of strange things with their hands.

Right now they were flapping them violently at the wrist so the fingers made a snapping sound.

"My mum can't do this at all," said my son (who for the purposes of this piece would like to be called Mark) as he and his friends stood in a semi-circle, flapping and snapping.

"I don't care about that; I want to hear more about girls," I said.

Being a mother of a teenager is a strange and precarious exercise; you both know about sex, but nobody's actually talking. Better to talk about cannibalism or growing turnips.

But I've known Alan and Evan since they were grimy-handed and milky-faced seven-year-olds with water-color stains on the cuffs of their cotton pullovers. And I've been carefully cultivating them all these years — feeding them chocolate milk and Mars Bars and letting them watch TV until dawn — so that when this day finally came, I could force them to tell me about their sex lives.

"You can't tell your mother things about sex," said Evan. "A mother has her own problems with PMTs and all. Plus it's your *mother*!"

"I am not opening my mouth," said Mark.

"Girls are people, maybe," said Evan, a baby-faced hulk with bleached hair.

"Most boys my age don't think about the true value of a woman. They just think about sex."

He stretched his hands wildly above his head in an enormous yawn and knocked over a vase of flowers.

"That's how suave I am with the women," he said.

"There was this girl," said Alan, who is blond and intense. "We told her we were NIDA drama students. We thought we could pull it off."

"She was very sexual," said Evan, "she offered me, Alan and this other kid... "

"Let's just say a motel, tequila and fun and pleasure entered into it," said Alan. "Anyway she was just leading us on. We found out later that she had herpes."

"She was aggressive," said Evan.

Aggressive?

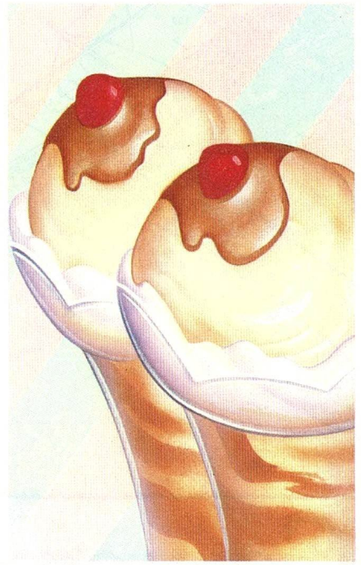
"There's one kind of girl you have sex with," said Alan, "another kind of girl you have a crush on."

Oh, guys, please, don't tell me this.

"The girls I have liked, I have only liked from a distance," said Alan. "None of them has been aggressive. Sweet girls. But the girls I go out with are pretty aggressive. I'm a nervous guy. I guess it's not a big deal getting rejected; you forget about it in a month. But I've asked a girl out only about five times. I just can't bring myself to do it. So if a girl sits on my lap and wiggles her... ah... well, it's easier to ask her out."

"I'll think a long time before I ask a girl out," said Evan.

"I'll do it if I will myself to do it," said Alan.



"I refuse to answer anything," said Mark.

"That's why sluts are easier," said Evan.

Sluts? Oh, my God. Still? Readers, I had hopes for this generation. Sons of the women's movement, sons of single mothers, sons of women with demanding careers. Sluts?

Has anything changed? What about feminism?

"Throw it out the window," said Alan.

"Well, it's silly that women should be paid less for the same job as a man," said Evan.

"She shouldn't have the job in the first place," said Alan. "Only kidding."

"But I'm not changing nappies," said Evan. "In a theoretical sense I would, but I don't like children."

"Remember in Lucy's class," Alan asked Mark, "she was reading us *Charlie And The Chocolate Factory* and I stole your comb and you hit me and she threw *me* out of class? Me? Remember that, smegma head?"

"Bogey bum," said Mark.

"We're not exactly grown-up yet," said Alan.

We went to a restaurant and they made plenty of jokes about the blowfish on the menu.

"Why can't women give gifts to men?" asked Evan, "Why do we always... "

"I've never given a gift to a woman," said Alan.

"What about those ear-rings?" asked Mark.

"What about that bracelet?" asked Evan.

"You know, I stay away more from the women I like than I stay away from the sluts," said Alan. "There was this girl I really liked and she really liked me. I got so freaked out every time I saw her, I would go away.

"I just started acting like an arsehole so she wouldn't come near me. Her smile drove me crazy."

"It's a lot harder to talk to a girl you *really* like. It's easy with easier girls," said Evan. "Although I think girls should talk about their sexuality. I'm mature. I live with my mother and know how a woman acts. Girls really kinda like it when I tell them I'm a virgin."

Suddenly they were all pressing their palms together and making snaky movements.

"All this hand-playing is extremely symbolic, boys."

"Very phallic," said Evan.

"Very Freud," said Mark.

"In the first couple of years at high school, sluts got attention; we were just breaking into masturbating then," said Evan.

"They just get hated now," said Mark.

"I'm in love with this girl," said Alan. "I mean, like, really in love.

"If she brought up the subject of sex, which I reckon she will do pretty soon, I'd probably have to say no because there's no way we're ready for it yet.

"Even in this so-called permissive day and age, I think that sex should be really special.

"And that especially goes for the first time.

"I also happen to think that right now none of us can think straight about something as complex as sex."

"We're 16 years old," said Mark.

"Yeah," agreed Evan, "and let me tell you, our hormones are more active than our brain cells." —CYNTHIA HEIMEL

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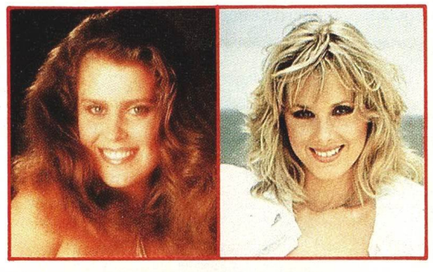

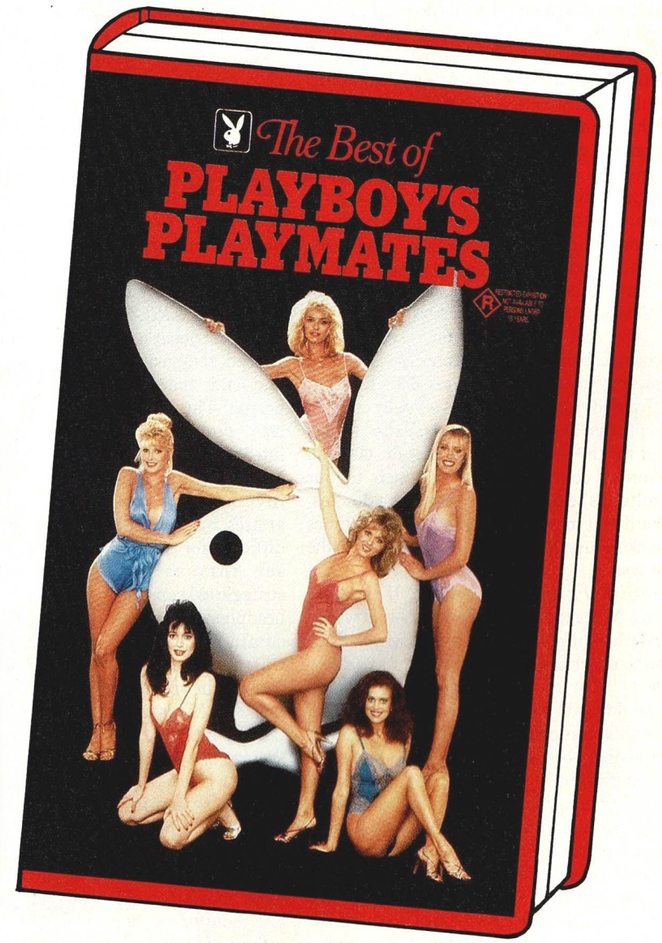

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MEN

For years women have been telling us we're lousy lovers. It's time to give tat for tit!

You think I won't pay for this one? Hey, not for a thousand years will I be forgiven for this one. If I live to the year 2987 (and I plan to do that) I will not escape this particular column. But a man's got to do what a man's got to do.

We men have been hearing for decades that we are lousy lovers. It's a given in this culture. If we are dumb enough to believe what women have been telling us, it seems that today's male is hasty, inconsiderate, ignorant, confused and uncaring. We are, supposedly, limp-dicked premature ejaculators with no sense of timing or communication. There's not a Casanova among us according to the hypercritics who blast us from TV and radio, books and magazines. (Yes, and sometimes in person.)

I've got news for you, sweethearts/cookies/babies. When it comes to sack time, most of you aren't such great shakes, either. Granted that this culture is sexually chaotic, repressed and unhappy. But it's time to give tat for tit — after too much tit for tat. You women contribute just as much to our culture's sexual malaise as we men do. Yes, hard as it may be to believe, you sometimes make lousy lovers, too. Let me count the ways.

THE INFREQUENT FLYER If she were on a Mileage Plus airline program, it would take her 10 years to earn a trip from Sydney to Canberra. To live with her is not to know her. "Not tonight, I have a headache" should read "Not this year, I have a career." In this relationship, the hand you hold will probably be your own, but don't be embarrassed by that. Rejection and lack of interest are general all over this workaholic culture. You think you're the Lone Ranger because you're living with an Infrequent Flyer? Then who are all those other masked men out there?

THE CLIFF-DWELLER She lives on the edge of everything, especially the extended orgasm. It is always just around the corner, but the corner is forever disappearing into the distance. Superman might be able to satisfy her, but it's 60-40 he'll finally give up and take a nap. Be assured that when he awakes, he'll hear about how inconsiderate he was.

THE SPERM HATER This woman has a basic fear of our precious bodily fluids. She treats the male orgasm as if it were an explosion at a nuclear power station. She scrambles away, a distasteful expression on her face, and normally she says "Yucky poo" as you lie there like a beached whale, wishing she would at least hold you while your pleasure passes. By her standards, sperm is radioactive poison and should never be deposited on skin, sheets or clothing. She is also the proud owner of the Fastest Douche In The West. Makes a fella feel a little unwanted sometimes, doesn't it?

THE STATISTICIAN You can spot her by the tape measure she keeps under her pillow and the pencil marks on her wall. She's a combination of systems analyst, historian and official scorer. Her brain is one big computer print-out, and if you ask her, she'll reel off numbers and measurements that boggle your mind: Where you rate compared to her other lovers in terms of genital size, number of orgasms (hers, then yours), errors committed, times you were too base and runs scored. Her accounting will be accurate, impersonal and cold. Only her eyes will glow as she quantifies love.

THE ELECTRICIAN Yes, you guessed it. The Electrician is sister to the Statistician. Indeed, they may be one and the same person. The Electrician punches data into her computer keyboard while your lovemaking progresses, but it will be difficult for you to see this as you struggle to keep your headphones from becoming entangled with hers and as you sort out the vibrators that she keeps in a rack by her bed. On average, she will have two videotape machines running, one to record your activities, the other to play back an X-rated movie for the TV monitor on her ceiling. Don't feel dehumanised by the stock market ticker she has on her wall. Everybody she sleeps with has to put up with that. And yes, it can be disconcerting that the Electrician is prone to carrying on telephone conversations from one of the six phones she has on her headboard while you are huffing and puffing away, but look at it this way: without call-waiting, where would civilisation be today?

THE AEROBIC LOVER Isn't she something? Will her activity ever cease? Why does your back hurt? Why are you dehydrated? Why are you wondering if you'll have a coronary and she'll never even notice? Is it fair that she can go for four hours straight and never stop for breath? Why does she wear her aerobic dance shoes to bed? Staminade instead of champagne? Only one change of sweatbands allowed? Mirrors all over, even the floor? *Bolero* is too slow for her? What are those yelping sounds she makes at odd moments? Why does she confuse you with her aerobics instructor? Why does she have a hotline to her own team of paramedics? Why are they leaning over you and giving you oxygen? Why is she still bouncing on the bed?

THE SCREECHER This one is sneaky and mean. There is no way to spot her beforehand, either. You just have to place your bets and then go for broke. You've been there. You know what I mean. It's a sweet moment. You're making love with a warm and wonderful woman, and if the truth were known, this is how you'd like to make your living. You love comfort and tenderness and humor and caring, and sex is central to your life, a denial of death, a creative gesture in a sometimes cold universe. You wait for her, you hold yourself in, you administer and placate and excite.

Then, as you feel her rhythms rise, your own pleasure approaches, and as she rides into her sunset, you take a deep breath and — your ears, what is happening to your ears? Someone is sticking a knitting needle into your ears. You have never heard a sound like that before. Is it nuclear war? Is there a jet engine in the bedroom? Your ears are bleeding, you're sure of it. There is this unearthly screeching going on, and there is no distance between you and the screeching. She has your head in a vice and her mouth has just swallowed your ear drums. They are somewhere slightly above her voice box and they are now hers, hers forever, because you will never hear again, not a sound. The Screecher has claimed another victim.

•

Okay, you cultural vixens who have mocked male sexuality, you angry females who have claimed men are such a mess in the bedroom, how do you like them apples?

They're no more rotten than the ones you've been throwing at us.

— ASA BABER

MONEY

Your futures in the stars, saleable options on cars, and funny money behind the Iron Curtain.

CONSULTING THE STARS

According to Jack Gillen, publisher of the financial newsletter, *Jack Gillen Predicts,* the rise and fall of commodity prices can be predicted by studying the stars carefully. Gillen, an astrologer, issues buy and sell orders to his clients based on the positions of the moon and planets on the date when the commodity futures contract was issued. Contrary to what you might think, Gillen is not the only one in this business. His main competition is Bill Foster, another astrologer-publisher, who uses a computer to produce horoscopes for such commodities as gold, pork bellies and wheat.

Gillen's most recent predictions have not been much to get excited about, but Foster is something else entirely. During 1985, Foster's predictions were correct 62 percent of the time. To put this in perspective, it is worth noting that a tossed coin would be correct 50 percent of the time. Nevertheless, Foster's 62 percent was sufficient to make him the third most accurate predictor of commodity price trends in the USA. According to Bruce Babcock of the *Commodity Traders Consumer Report*, Foster "has been right too often for it to be luck; it must be something else".

MAGIC NUMBER

How long does it take to double your money in a savings account? To find out, simply divide the magic number 72 by the interest rate paid on your savings. For example, at 8 percent interest your savings will double every nine years (72 divided by 8 equals 9). At 12 percent interest, your savings will double in six years.

FAKE GOODS

Shakespeare might have been unconcerned ("What's in a name?"), but when it comes to brand names, manufacturers are very worried indeed. Each year, billions of dollars' worth of counterfeit Rolex watches, Carrera glasses, Opium perfume, and Cabbage Patch dolls are sold to unsuspecting customers. I know at least one person who discovered, when he brought his watch into a jeweller for repairs, that the expensive gold Rolex he bought at a bargain price on an Asian business trip was neither a Rolex nor gold.

Manufacturers are working on new ways of making their merchandise uncopyable, including special "fingerprints" which can only be detected by electronic equipment and the use of expensive holograms (such as those on Visa and Mastercards). The movie industry, which loses about $1 billion a year in video cassette rentals because of home duplication, is developing an anti-copying process which distorts the picture of any duplicated tape.

Despite these measures, counterfeiting will continue and a bit of common sense on the part of shoppers will always be required. For example, dirt cheap jeans sold at flea markets are unlikely to be genuine Levi's, no matter what the label says. Of course, discounts are often available on genuine items, but to be safe, take advantage of sales offered by reputable traders, preferably near your home. Such shops have reputations to maintain and are unlikely to stock counterfeit merchandise.

ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT KENNEDY

CAR OPTIONS THAT MAKE SENSE (AND DOLLARS)

You can spend thousands of dollars for manufacturer-installed options for your car. Some of these may be aesthetically pleasing — at least to you — but only a few can be expected to increase your car's resale value. According to the magazine *Changing Times*, the best option is air-conditioning, which almost always makes your car more valuable when it comes time to trade or sell. But this applies mainly to manufacturer-installed systems. Those added later on are less powerful and more likely to produce engine problems.

Automatic transmission is another option that will add value to your car years down the road. But sun roofs, cruise control, tilting steering wheels and high-tech stereo appeal to only a limited number of buyers. They are unlikely to boost your car's resale value unless you are lucky enough to find a buyer who is specifically looking for them.

There are a few options that may actually make your car harder to sell. For example, buyers are keeping away from diesel engines. Of course, the overall condition of your car is more important to its resale value than any specific option. Well-maintained cars always sell better than those that have been neglected, whatever their respective options.

LAUGH FOR SUCCESS

According to a survey conducted by an executive recruiting firm, Robert Half International, 81 percent of corporate personnel officers believe a good sense of humor is an important plus for anyone interested in a business career. Those with a ready smile and a way with a joke are seen as creative, smarter and less rigid than their more sombre colleagues. Perhaps even more important, they are less likely to be sacked. It appears that workers with a sense of humor are liked better by their supervisors. And let's face it, it's harder to sack someone you like than someone you don't.

BEST HOTELS

Business Traveller and *Institutional Investor*, two magazines whose subscribers travel a lot (and can afford to), recently surveyed their readers' hotel preferences. The two most favored hotels were the Mandarin in Hong Kong and the Oriental, Bangkok. Among other highly rated hostelries were the New York Hilton, the Four Seasons in Washington, DC, the Regent and the Peninsula, both in Hong Kong, the Shangri-la, Singapore, the Vier Jahreszeiten in Hamburg, the Connaught, London, and the Ritz of Paris. No Australian hotel made the top 10.

HOT MONEY IN HUNGARY

The Swiss have been cracking down recently on the users of their special numbered accounts. In recent years, they have frozen the account of Jean-Claude ("Baby Doc") Duvalier (previously of Haiti), and refused to let Ferdinand Marcos into the country, let alone near one of his bank accounts.

But necessity is the mother of invention and hot money has found a new home at the National Savings Bank of Hungary. Like most Eastern countries, Hungary is starved for hard currency. As a consequence, accounts may be opened under any name or number. The bank pays about 6 percent interest and promises to release no information to inquisitive Western governments. — SETH GREGORY

SPORT

Is fencing a prissy pastime for blokes in white tights? Hell, no. It's a darned dangerous sport.

Fencing is two guys in tight whites prancing about on television, jumping and shouting in French when they make a hit. Prissy. That's probably what most of us think, anyway. But the reality is so rough, it makes you wonder why people want to fence in the first place.

The reality is fanatical dedication for no monetary reward and the very real risk of injury or death. Even at the highest levels of competition, the norm was several deaths a year until a few years ago, when new equipment improved safety. Injury or death can happen when a flaw in the sword causes it to break. A razor-sharp edge remains, which could pierce a coat of armor. Jackets made of the bullet-proof material Kevlar, stainless steel masks and a new, stronger steel for the blades have reduced the risks, but at the last world championships a sword broke nonetheless. It went right through the opponent's protective clothing and he got it in the groin. Hard to say if that's worse than when a Russian champion's blade broke and went through a German's mask a few years back.

There are four weapons used in the Olympic Games and the world championships. The *sabre* derives from the old cavalry sword. In a fight, a valid hit may be made either with the cutting edge or the point. The *epee* (pronounced a-pay), which comes from the old duelling sword, has a grooved triangular blade which does a neat job of running someone through — the blood flows down the groove, making it easier to remove the blade. But in competition a valid hit can be made only with the epee's point. The other weapon is a *foil* (there's also a *lady's foil*). With a foil, you may hit only the opponent's body in order to score competition points, whereas with an epee the arms, legs, head and feet are fair targets as well. Rules and conventions for the epee fights are also much less complicated than for the other weapons, thus making epee the spectator's favorite.

For these reasons, current Australian fencing champion Steven Paul believes, "In the next 10 years or so, there will only be epee. And I think they'll start having competitions with sharpened edges or points — and bare-chested also. When you look at boxing, football, a lot of sports nowadays, it's the violent aspect of it that gets people's adrenalin going."

Paul isn't joking when he suggests, "The rules would take a lot of working out but it would be like the first to grow so weak from loss of blood that he collapsed, without death. I think that would have fantastic spectator appeal."

The 32-year-old Paul, a former British champion and Olympic fencer for a decade, has been run through the leg and the side, both times as a result of broken swords. He's an instructor in Sydney now, retired from Olympic competition, although in the first of seven major events in the 1986 world championship circuit — in Melbourne last September — he came third.

Like many who fence, Paul originally got interested through others in his family. His grandfather was an Olympic coach, his father and two cousins all longtime members of the British Olympic team. Paul's personal bests were 10th in the world rankings for two years and a 13th placing at both the Moscow and LA Olympics.

His grandfather taught Errol Flynn and Basil Rathbone how to fence. Rathbone was good, but Flynn? "The trouble with Flynn, apparently, was he was a bit stupid, and he couldn't remember more than two or three moves in a row. So you know all those great long exchanges, bang, bang, up and down the stairs, hanging from chandeliers and all that? He just repeated the three moves he could remember." Then the film was speeded up slightly, Paul says, to make the fights look flasher.

Paul thinks the fight scenes in the Russell Mulcahy-directed film *Highlander*, starring Christopher Lambert and Sean Connery, have the best examples of swordplay in recent cinema. That fencing was choreographed by Bob Anderson, Paul's former national coach for England, who also choreographed all the *Star Wars* swordfights.

On terra firma, the last recorded duel was fought in France in 1926. "There's no way I'd come *en garde* in front of a madman with a sharpened sword," Paul declares. "I'd run away, because all that beautiful technique you'd put in, he'd say, 'Sod that.' He'd just come at you flashing away, and there's nothing worse."

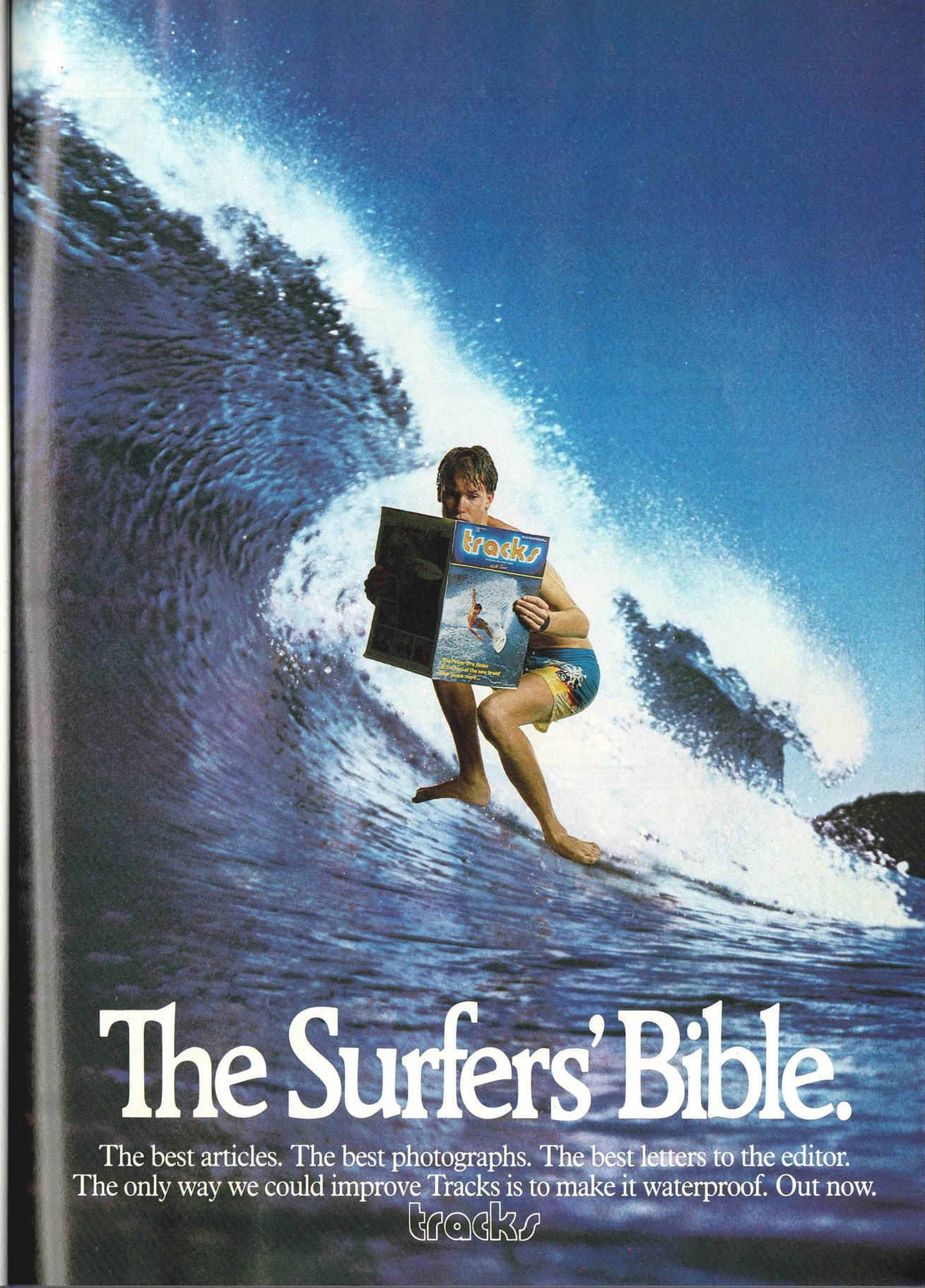
In the somewhat more predictable world of competition fencing, the basic rule is, hit him before he hits you. Five good hits win the fight. Competitions are structured in pools, with everyone fighting each other to win promotion up through four rounds. When there are 32 fencers left, it's direct elimination, with 10 hits for each victory. At the highest levels, fencers specialise in one weapon.

Training is exhaustive, four or five hours of fencing a day, plus running or swimming for overall fitness, speed training and weight-lifting. Champions start young and it's purely amateur, so money doesn't figure as a motivation. Australia usually sends three or four qualifiers to the Olympics, but a full team consists of 20 fencers — five on each weapon. No one in Australia aside from Paul, who moved here two years ago, has yet had success internationally.

On the domestic front, there are only about 1000 competitive fencers around the country, aged from about 10 to 50. Basic equipment, consisting of a weapon, jacket, mask and glove, costs approximately $130. Then there's club membership, priced at $20 or $30, and the cost of tuition. A full set of competition gear, however, can cost from $500 to $4000, including three or four weapons which are electrically wired to record hits. The tips have spring-loaded buttons which press on to two contact plateaus connected to wires that run down the blade to a plug behind the handguard. From there, a body wire goes up the fencer's sleeve and connects with a spring-loaded spool which moves the wire along with the fencer's moves. Finally, the wire connects to a central recorder which lights a bulb —red for scoring a hit, green for receiving one.

If you just want to have a thrust and parry with a non-electric or "steam" foil, contact your state branch of the Australian Amateur Fencing Federation and ask about clubs in your area. Secretary-general of the federal group is Robyn Chaplin, at 11 Tafquin Street, Panorama, SA 5041, phone (08) 276 6828. You should be able to use your local club's equipment at first, until you decide whether or not to buy any. For more information call Steven Paul on (02) 357 2146. — STEVE BUNK

ILLUSTRATION BY SCOTT KENNEDY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SHOWBIZ

A Sex Pistol and a jazzman meet death in New York and Rumpole ends up Travelling North.

HE DID IT HIS WAY: Hands up, all those who remember the **Sex Pistols**. They certainly made their anarchic impact on the birth of punk, but apart from the few who saw *The Great Rock'n'Roll Swindle*, which was really the gospel according to their even more incredible manager, **Malcolm McLaren**, there are not many who have much idea of what went on behind the newspaper headlines. All that is about to change with the release of *Sid And Nancy*, a new film from the very talented **Alex** (*Repo Man*) **Cox**, who has chosen to concentrate on the life and extremely unsavory death of the band's bass player, **Sid Vicious**. Poor Sid, a long-time friend of singer **Johnny Rotten**, and possessed of even less talent than the rest of the group, was brought in by McLaren to add some kind of sex appeal to the act, based on his penchant for mindless violence, and to a great extent the Gimmick (as McLaren called him) worked, at least until the fateful trip to America, where the group fell apart. But meanwhile, and quite incredibly, Sid had fallen in love with a devastatingly awful groupie, **Nancy Spungen**, and she with him. Together their lives became one long heroin nightmare, alleviated by the odd high point like the video recording of *I Did It My Way*, but culminating tragically, or perhaps inevitably, in Nancy's bleeding to death from a

Beautiful people: Sid (Gary Oldman) and Nancy (Chloe Webb) tell the world to get stuffed.

stab wound in a New York hotel and Sid's arrest for her murder. He died of a drug overdose before he could be brought to trial, but watching this movie makes one wonder how he survived as long as he did.

●

TO LIVE AND DIE IN NEW YORK: A very different sort of musician, but in the end the result was much the same: *'Round Midnight* is loosely based on the life of **Bud Powell**, a genius at the jazz piano, but just as unable to cope with life as Sid Vicious. **Bertrand Tavernier**'s new movie tells the story of a fictional saxophonist, Dale Turner, in the autumn of his life, but casting a real-life musician, **Dexter Gordon**, in the role adds an authenticity which takes *'Round Midnight* right out of the rut. Gordon/Turner arrives in Paris, an aged black musician, intent on escaping the life which is killing him in New York. His minders make sure he is never paid direct, aware that his next drink could kill him, but lack of self-respect ensures he takes each opportunity to go on a blinder. Eventually a French devotee of his genius takes it upon himself to dry him out and help him back to some semblance of dignity, where he undertakes to give up the booze. He begins to compose again, he even returns to New York, but eventually his French friend is forced to return to France and within a couple of weeks Turner is dead. The nightclub sequences have a moody, late-night jazz feeling, most of the time the music is terrific, and every gesture of Dexter Gordon's performance says he's been down that self-destructive Dale Turner road himself. A jazz classic, like the **Thelonious Monk** number which gives it its title.

The Minder and The Jazzman: Francois Cluzet and Dexter Gordon in 'Round Midnight.

MOVIE SCORECARD

capsule close-ups of current movies
by graham barry

Australian Dream A funny Oz sex comedy! What next? Noni Hazelhurst at her brilliant best. ¥¥¥

Children Of A Lesser God William Hurt as a teacher of the deaf who falls in love with his work. Pure romance. ¥¥¥

Half Moon Street Sigourney Weaver as research scientist/call girl caught up in power politics with Michael Caine. ¥¥¥¥

Jumpin' Jack Flash Spy thriller with lots of laughs and Whoopi Goldberg. ¥¥¥

Mosquito Coast Harrison Ford and Peter Weir together again for worrying tale of insanity in the jungle. ¥¥

'Night, Mother Sissy Spacek wants to suicide and Ann Bancroft can't stop her. Duet for great actresses. ¥¥¥

Peggy Sue Got Married But would she do it all again? Back to the past with Coppola and Kathleen Turner. ¥¥¥¥

Soul Man WASP student plays black to get a scholarship. Easy laughs but little substance. Rae Dawn Chong helps. ¥¥

Stand By Me Four boys between childhood and adolescence learn to stand up for themselves the hard way. ¥¥¥

The Color Of Money *The Hustler* 25 years on, with Newman teaching Tom Cruise. Just misses. ¥¥¥

The Fly The uncharismatic Jeff Goldblum in a remake of a horror classic with the emphasis on nausea. ¥

The Name Of The Rose Mystery thriller in a monastery with Sean Connery as medieval Sherlock Holmes. ¥¥¥

Three Amigos Camping up Hollywood myths with Chevy Chase, Steve Martin. They were never this funny apart. ¥¥¥

¥¥¥¥ Don't miss ¥¥ Worth a look
¥¥¥ Good show ¥ Forget it

●

RUMPOLE IN PARADISE: **David Williamson** plays make good movies — have another look at *Don's Party* if you don't believe us — but at first sight it might appear that one of his most critically acclaimed works, *Travelling North*, which lacks the element of knockabout farce, might not translate so easily to the screen. All the more credit to producer **Ben Gannon** for casting **Leo McKern** in the leading role of Frank, the cantankerous old devil who marries a much younger woman and carries her off to his retirement in Far North Queensland in the face of much opposition from her grown-up daughters. ("Abandoned when I was eight and abandoned again now," says the cranky one, **Michelle Fawdon**.) McKern brings a deeply sympathetic touch to this portrait of growing old, but there are fine performances from **Julia Blake** as his lady fair, **Graham Kennedy** as the too-neighborly neighbor and **Henri Szeps** as the local GP.

●

REELING AND ROCKING: **Laurie Anderson** is doing the music for **Jonathan** *(Stop Making Sense)* **Demme**'s next movie, *Swimming To Cambodia*. . . **Mick Fleetwood** and **Dweezil Zappa** will play father and son in *The Running Man*, based on a **Stephen King** story. . . **Adam Ant** and **X**'s **John Doe** have made a movie, *Slam Dance*, with **Tom Hulce** and **Harry Dean Stanton**. Ant plays a nightclub owner and Doe a corrupt cop. . . The excellent *Sid And Nancy* soundtrack includes a haunting ballad by **The Pogues** appropriately called *Haunted* sung by **Elvis Costello**'s wife **Cait O'Riordan.**

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DEAR GIRLS OF PLAYBOY

Our lovely ladies of Playboy answer your most intimate queries.

The question for the month:
Do women brag about sexual conquests the way men do?

Some do, that's for sure! As far as I'm concerned, I don't brag but it *is* a topic of discussion. And it depends on who I'm talking to. It's not the sort of thing I would bring up with gusto at a cocktail party or an Australian PLAYBOY promotion. When the time is right and I'm with someone who has a pair of trusting ears, I do talk about men and sex but not necessarily conquest. (God help any eavesdroppers!) You know, finding that special man is, for me, the real conquest. But I think that's another story...

Grace Parr

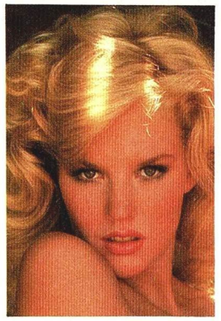
GRACE PARR
MARCH 1984

A woman might tell her closest girlfriends, but I don't think most women go around bragging about who they've slept with or how well he performed in bed. If a woman is insecure, she may boast to make herself look better or to make a friend jealous. But I think women are short on details. A friend might say, "Well, how was he?" You'd answer something like, "He cuddles nice" or "We had a wonderful time." *Most* women wouldn't get too specific. A few might talk about size, but I won't get into that.

Ava Fabian

AVA FABIAN
SEPTEMBER 1986

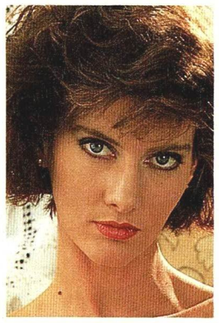
Women do brag. I remember when my friend did it with the best-looking guy at school. She was so excited, so happy, but she didn't yell it out. Women like to tell a close friend and swear her to secrecy. If someone came up to me and asked me if I was sleeping with Mr X, I would deny it. I wouldn't say, "Yeah, I'm sleeping with him. And he's great." No way. I'd say, "Who?" That is not to say that sleazy women don't go around bragging about who they got, but most women would brag to only a close friend.



Rebekka Armstrong

REBEKKA ARMSTRONG
OCTOBER 1986

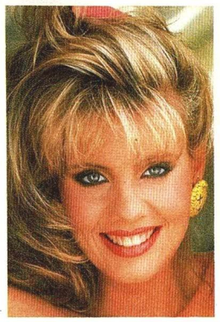
I hate to admit it but I think we do, maybe even more so than men, but in a different way. Men omit the details and all they really brag about is how many women they've taken to bed. They use only two lines: "She was a great lay," or "She was a dud lay." Women do discuss things openly with their best girlfriends. A group of girls together talking about their boyfriends' bedroom antics can get very juicy. I know two men who'd like to be flies on the wall so they could hear my best girlfriend and me having our midnight chats.



Ali Lynwood

ALI LYNWOOD
DECEMBER 1985

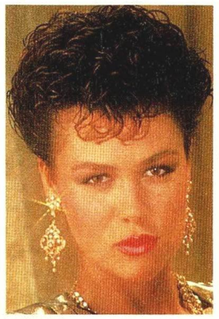
It's human nature to boast from time to time. When women do it, it's usually more in terms of the romantic details. Men usually brag about the sexual details. I tend to keep my personal life private. I think that the more you care about someone in a relationship, the more private you are about it. It's easier to be public about a casual encounter. When women talk about these things to one another, they focus more on what a man said and how he acted than on how he was in bed. They tend to discuss the way he treated them — the romantic parts.



Laurie Carr

LAURIE CARR
JANUARY 1987

Certainly women brag, but not exactly the same way as men. Women tend to tell their best friends lots of details about their love lives. So in that way we do brag. Do we brag about the conquest? No, because — let's face it — it's easy for most women, if they are half-way decent, to get a man to bed if they want him to be there. What we do is confide in our friends — not the gory details but the informational ones. And women tend to confide in one or two close friends, not a tableful or a barful.



Carol Ficatier

CAROL FICATIER
JANUARY 1986

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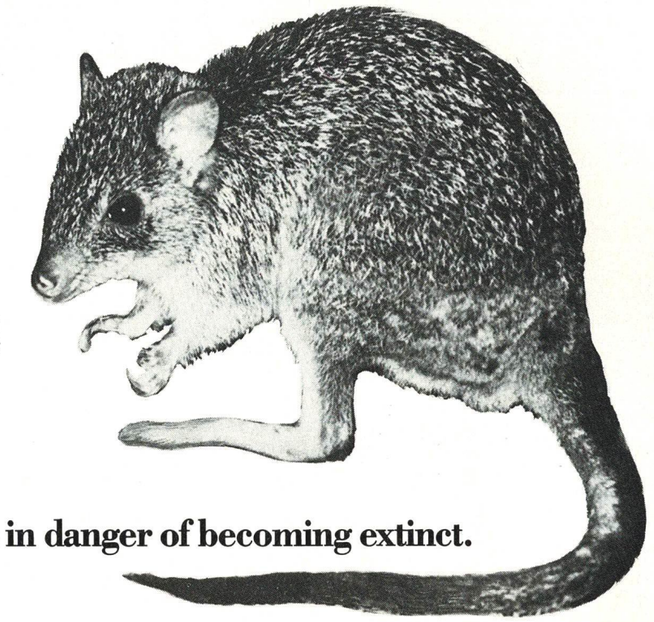

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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: LIONEL RICHIE

A candid conversation with the number one songwriting champion about breaking away, dancing on the ceiling and singing all the way to the bank.

Although unsympathetic critics can be scathing about what they've called his saccharine tunes and Boy-Scout demeanor, Lionel Richie says matter-of-factly, "My music works. People respond, the records sell — and NOBODY determines my musical journey but me!"

Richie's composing muse has yielded five Grammys (32 nominations), 14 American Music Awards, a Golden Globe, and a roomful of People's Choice statuettes. His bathroom is for photographs — and its walls are covered with favorite friends: Quincy Jones, Michael Jackson, Diana Ross, right-hand producer James Carmichael, and members of Richie's Alabama family. "Making the wall," he laughs, "means true friend." Although he grounds himself with family trips to Hawaii and likes to periodically return to Tuskegee — where he keeps the same apartment he used as a college student — the touring life and the fast lane hold equal appeal.

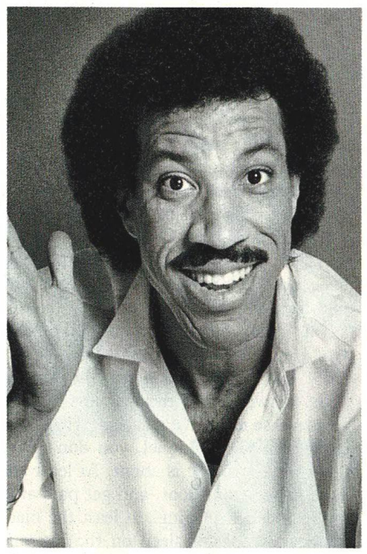
Born June 20, 1949, Lionel Richie was raised in elitist academic environs, across the street from the Tuskegee Institute, where the hard-work philosophy of Booker T. Washington, the school's visionary founder, served as the Richie family credo. Both the boy's father, Lyonel, a systems analyst for the army, and his mother, Alberta, an elementary school principal, believed the key to success was education. And both parents were determined to keep their son protected from a more alien environment. "I never even went the three miles into town without them — and then, only to the bank," he recalls.

Richie attended Tuskegee on a tennis scholarship, majoring in economics and accounting, and also took to roaming with his sax case — a ploy designed to impress the opposite sex. Thanks to a freshman talent show, he hooked up with five ambitious crooners who boasted they would become the "Black Beatles". In 1969, armed with a 200-page gameplan for success masterminded by Richie — which copied many of the touring and public relations ploys used by the Beatles — and calling themselves the Commodores, the group painstakingly carved out a regional following and hit the big time in 1971 as the warm-up group to the Jackson Five. Their 1974 hit Machine Gun fired them into the national spotlight, as did Just To Be Close To You (1976). But it wasn't until Richie led the way with Easy (1977), Three Times A Lady (1978), Still (1979), and Sail On (1979) that the group soared, racking up four gold and three platinum albums.

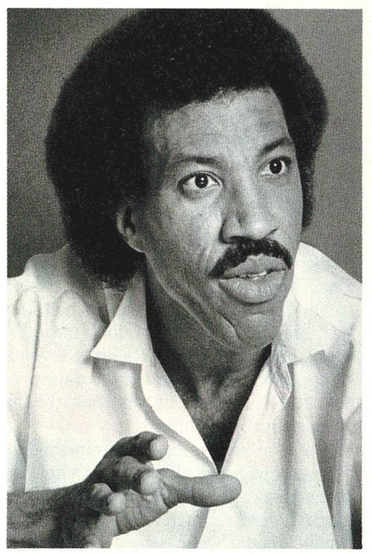
The downside of this success was that while Richie captured the spotlight, his cohorts became virtually ignored. Jealousy and resentment infested the relationship, although Commodores manager Benny Ashburn tried desperately to hold the band together. Group member William King accused Richie of pulling the group apart: "I just hope he realises the price the band paid so he could become a star."

His wife of 10 years, Brenda, a social worker with a passion for children, has also faced, with Richie, the disappointment of not yet having been able to have children. In the meantime, they relish the presence of their 10 godchildren who roam a Spanish-style house sumptuously decorated with African objets d'art, overstuffed furniture and, in the living room, Lalique swans nesting near a mammoth

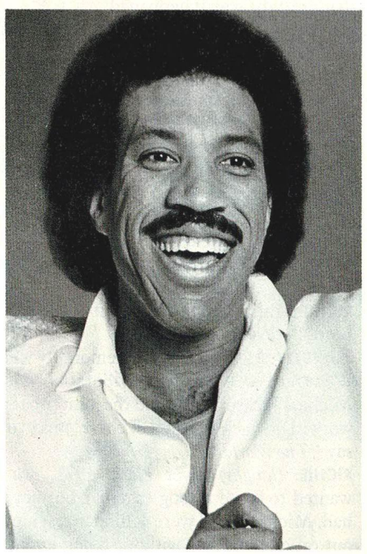
MARK SENNETT



"I was a boy scout. I was an altar boy. I grew up on a college campus. Who wants to hear about a kid who wasn't from a broken home? Well, that's not how it happened for me."



"I was the kid who was too slow for baseball, too short for basketball, too light for football — and I wasn't the world's greatest lover. So here was something I could do."



"For the past 10 years Willie Nelson and Kenny Rogers have been the top male vocalists of the year. Why? Because they represent the world between New York and L.A."

Bosendorfer concert grand. "He deserves to have the best," says Brenda of her husband.

We sent writer ***Glenn Plaskin*** *to talk with Richie over a period of weeks. Says Plaskin: "I worried that Richie, the perennial nice-guy, might turn out to be as bland in conversation as sharp-tongued critics have accused him of being in his music. A sky-high career hadn't driven him to drugs or fits of star temperament; his sunny disposition and tongue-tied thank yous for dozens of awards ('This is outrageous!' he'd say, over and over again) had become the butt of good-natured jokes; there were no marital scandals, nervous collapses — not even a workout video.*

"I was therefore relieved to meet the real 'Skeet', as he calls himself: mischievously ironic, methodical as a craftsman, perhaps too quick to trust, and disarmingly candid — though cagey as any political candidate when dodging an unwanted question."

PLAYBOY: Your fans love you, but some critics think of you as a Boy Scout. Are you?

RICHIE: I *was* a Boy Scout. I was an altar boy. I grew up on a college campus. The word is BORING — because who the hell wants to hear about a kid who wasn't a gangster from a broken home? Everybody can't be on drugs. The standard line is: "How did you make it in the business?" and the standard answer is: "I started out in the ghetto, coked up, didn't know my mum and dad, finally struggled my way into a rock'n'roll band, got off drugs, and here I am today." Well, that's not the way it happened.

PLAYBOY: So when critics charge you with being a little. . . wimpy?

RICHIE: *(laughter)* I say: *Thank you.* Watch me at the ticket booth, watch record sales. Wimpy to me means, guess what? Sales. Criticisms don't bother me. One guy called me: "Yucky, gooey, icky — a true maltz schmaltz," before *Can't Slow Down* came out. Then I received a telegram from him saying: "Okay, fella, I was wrong."

PLAYBOY: Do you think you're a good lyric writer?

RICHIE: I think that I'm hitting it dead on the head. Period.

PLAYBOY: As you did most memorably with *We Are The World,* a collaboration with Michael Jackson. How did the joint process work? Did Jackson say *"We Are"* and you say *"The World"*?

RICHIE: *(laughs)* Ever since 1971, we'd wanted to write a song together but never had. Michael and I were willing to test ideas out on one another without being embarrassed that we'd look like idiots. We sat down and talked about it for three days before we wrote the song and came around to the main point: the song had to be an anthem. From a lyric point of view, Quincy Jones told us we could never use phrases like "let us stand together as one" if *one* artist were performing the song. But when you've got 45 of the strongest performers in the business, the body of sound and spirit lives up to the words.

PLAYBOY: The song became a monster hit, but it also became a target, a parody, the butt of a string of jokes on *Saturday Night Live.* Did that bother you?

RICHIE: I always trust success when 15 different jokes in five different languages surface in four days. I think it's a fabulous song considering its purpose. But when I turned on my TV set and watched people in London, New York, LA, Paris, singing in the street, when I found out that jailed rebels in South Africa and South America were singing in their cells — how big a joke was this song?

PLAYBOY: You keep a lot of fans happy, but some say that during your shows, your early stuff — the Commodores material — really swings, while the later songs can seem "schmaltzy, TV evangelist, calculated, trite sentimentality". Sound familiar?

RICHIE: Yup. I am not insulted. The one thing I know about the world is that everybody wants to feel they're hip, when actually, most of us aren't. There are only three or four hip capitals of the world: Paris, New York, London and, maybe, LA. Now: try to write a song for those cities and you're going to bomb. That's called a fad. Every year there's a listener's poll. For the past 10 years Willie Nelson and Kenny Rogers have been the top male vocalists of the year. The winners weren't Mister Mister, Prince or Michael Jackson. Why? Because Nelson and Rogers represent the world between New York and LA. They're not hip. They don't know anything about hip. But they understand *words.* "Take this job and shove it." "Put some loving in your heart." And the audience reacts: "Yeah, that's how I feel."

PLAYBOY: But is audience draw equivalent to artistic success? *Porky's* and *Friday The 13th* were popular, too.

RICHIE: I know exactly what you're saying and I'm not going to psych it out, nor tell you I'm walking through my career with rose-colored glasses. But after an evening of *Truly, Lady, Three Times A Lady,* people are jumping out of their seats. When I say I'm going for some edge, I don't mean I'm taking apart the Lionel Richie everybody knows: I'm just going to test the waters.

PLAYBOY: But where do you draw the line when testing new waters?

RICHIE: You have to be open-minded. The punk groups only look punk — it's not real. When I was a kid, I once turned on the TV to watch a press conference with a "wild sex maniac fanatic" who sang "black" music named Elvis Presley. The lower part of Elvis's body was out of control. Fifteen years later Tom Jones was worse, or better, and he got a TV show doing it.

PLAYBOY: You're a composer and lyricist —

RICHIE: Yes, but *not* a trained musician. My grandmother's great frustration with me was that I memorised piano music rather than reading it — and I still don't read music. But I have a great ear. When I listen to an orchestrated song, I can hum all the parts.

PLAYBOY: Wouldn't reading music, or writing it down, be a useful tool in the studio?

RICHIE: When I first got to California, I ran into a wonderful guy named Norman Whitfield — he wrote *My Girl* and *Heard It Through The Grapevine* and every Temptations hit you ever heard. I asked: "What music school did you graduate from?" He said: "I hum." That's all I needed to hear.

PLAYBOY: How *do* you compose?

RICHIE: I start with the hook.

PLAYBOY: A hook? You mean like "all night long"?

RICHIE: Yeah. When people listen to *All Night Long,* they can't recite the verses, but they can remember *"all night long"*. In order to create a best-seller, you've got to have a hook. It didn't take me years of theorising to learn that.

PLAYBOY: You make composing sound very easy. Are there down days?

RICHIE: *(laughing)* Everything that Lionel Richie writes is not gold. For every good song, there are 20 that are pure crap. I throw them away.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever witness or experience any example of blatant racism during your childhood in Alabama?

RICHIE: Nobody threw a rock at me and called me "nigger". Never. So I never felt the bitterness and the anger. But I remember driving from Detroit to Tuskegee and saying to my dad: "Let's stop off at a hotel," and he told me we'd have to make it to Nashville first. I couldn't understand why and he wouldn't tell me, just "It's the best hotel for us," and that was all. Thank God I missed the hate, the anger and frustration and moved on. I got the experience second hand, but *I* never suffered. And missing it, to some degree, had a great deal to do with the way I approached my music. I was listening to Bach, Beethoven and Chopin every day.

PLAYBOY: This relatively privileged existence must have irritated some of your less-than-fortunate colleagues later on.

RICHIE: Damn right. I was once on a plane with Count Basie, returning from Japan, and I tried to identify with him. I said, "You know, Count, the business is hard. We travel so much... da, da, da." He looked at me and said: "Lionel, you don't even know what struggle is about. At least you come in the front door, and get paid after you're finished playing. At least the black bandleader doesn't sleep on the bus and have his meals sent down to him there while the white boys in the band sleep in the hotel." That was a lesson, an era I missed, an era Quincy Jones and Duke Ellington

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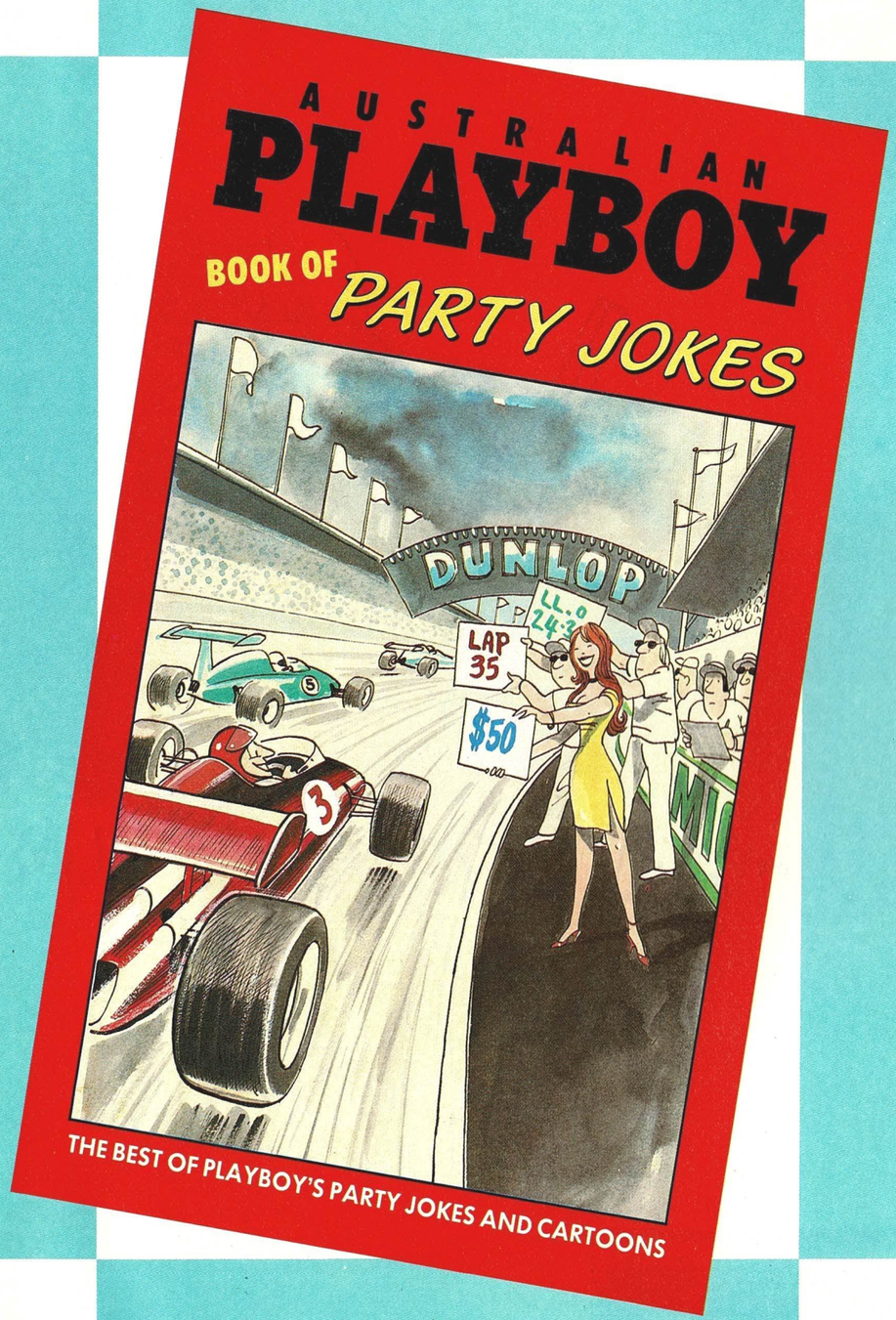

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told me about — but cats like Michael Jackson and me knew nothing about it.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel alienated from the black experience?

RICHIE: That question makes me angry. Heavy white acts, like the Beatles, said they patterned their music after Muddy Waters, and Chuck Berry — all black R&B artists. The Stones have said the same — not *one* interviewer asked them if they were leaving their roots. The passage of time has created a new breed of black guys, though everything isn't perfect for them. It's not perfect for me.

In my early years with the Commodores, what I didn't know about racism didn't kill me, because my naivety and ignorance got me farther upstream. I didn't approach getting ahead in the music business out of militance, I wasn't interested in making any social statement. I thought: "You sit down, you write a song, and you're a hit. And that's it."

PLAYBOY: It didn't work that way, did it?

RICHIE: Nope. I discovered the world of "categories". A quiet, subtle form of racism. Why is it that the Temptations could sell two million albums, the Grand Funk Railroad the same — but the Grand Funk played Shea Stadium and the Temptations a 1000-seat club?

In the '70s, the Commodores couldn't get into that white market. I'll never forget 1969. We took a song called *Just To Be Close To You* to a pop radio station in Baltimore. The program director, who happened to be a woman, told us: "Sorry. I can't play this record because it's too black." Reality hit me in the face. What does that mean? The nerve of that bitch. How can you look at six black men, make that statement with a straight face, and not even turn red doing it? I felt more embarrassed than she did.

PLAYBOY: Only embarrassed?

RICHIE: I was furious. I wanted to curse her out — but it's not the thing to do. I decided to kill her with a good dose of the truth, ie prove her wrong, which is exactly what we did. That one lady got me off my behind to work harder. I asked myself: How can we, the Commodores, make a difference? You know what? We didn't readjust our music one iota. In fact, right after *Just To Be Close To You*, we hit stations with *Machine Gun* and, later, with *Brick House* — both of which went gold. I went back to Baltimore and asked the same woman: "Is this white enough?" The third time I visited, she wasn't at the station anymore.

PLAYBOY: But you weren't trained musicians.

RICHIE: God, no. At the beginning, the thing that kept us rock'n'rollin' was the fact that none of us — except for our drummer, Walter Orange — were music majors. We were six guys crammed into a Chevy van — piled high with equipment and a few mattresses — who approached the music business as something we'd do for a while, before going our separate ways... as architects, engineers and business majors.

I was considered the horn holder, and the joke of the group was that I carried my sax around campus in order to learn how to play it. It wasn't until two years into the Commodores that they found out I was doing a real good job of faking it. We made a good sound together but we weren't killer musicians.

PLAYBOY: What made you begin to take the Commodores seriously?

RICHIE: Money. When we broke into the big time by playing the opening act for the Jackson Five. We watched Michael and his brothers walk out on to the stage of Madison Square Garden and they played about an hour and were paid $70,000. We travelled with the Jackson Five for almost three years, and in 1971 Motown heard us in Detroit and signed us to a long-standing contract.

PLAYBOY: What kind of a guy was Michael Jackson during those early years?

RICHIE: We're talking about the little kid who loved to knock on the door, holler for help, and throw a trash can of ice cold water on you at 7.00am. He was also an isolated little kid because he'd given up the sandbox too soon — nine years old and he had a hit record. So he missed everything, because all he'd ever heard were warnings, here come the girls, watch out; here come the fans, watch out; here come the reporters, watch out. So he's been watching out for 20 years!

PLAYBOY: And?

RICHIE: And I watched fame slam a door on his existence. Recovering from the publicity blitz of *Thriller* was tough — 35 million records, the cover of *Time, Newsweek, People, Rolling Stone;* dolls of him, his glove, jackets, pants and underwear being duplicated. It can drive you nuts. I think his closest link to reality is that he's *trying to come out*. Fame frightens him to death, but he's survived. The Michael Jackson I know — not the person the world knows — is a really beautiful cat. He's trying his best to stay real in an unreal situation.

PLAYBOY: But the breathy voice, the makeup, plastic surgeries, retreats to Disneyland and menagerie of house pets — is that really the way to touch down in the real world?

RICHIE: That's his voice. He's not putting on. He's got to find his space. I think he's just built a world that's comfortable for him — something he can survive in, though I'll tell you that he's still the practical joker I knew. He entertains practically every evening. Screens movies at his house or goes out to the movies with a team of people: I'm not talking about security; I'm talking about friends. That you never hear about.

One night, Elizabeth Taylor, MJ, and I went out to dinner and I couldn't believe the chemistry between Elizabeth and Michael — the best I'd ever seen. Because she was also a child star, Elizabeth could relate to him, and they talked about isolation, and what you do when you're lonely. It was good for Michael to hear that Elizabeth often went out of the house *without* security guards. That you could live without them was a revelation to him.

PLAYBOY: So you're touring with the Commodores and things are looking pretty good. Did you see yourself as a composer back then?

RICHIE: No, no, no. I didn't know anything about being a writer. I was still the great horn holder and singing two songs a 45-minute show. The turning point for me came in 1974 when the Commodores had their first hit, *Machine Gun.* Lionel Williams, who wrote the song, received a cheque for $35,000! Now the rest of us were all sitting around making about $150 to $200 a week — which was pretty good money for college guys — but that $35,000 gave me all the incentive I needed to be a composer. I said to myself: "Wait a minute, there's a market and a profit here." So in 1975 I wrote *This Is Your Life,* the first song I ever composed. And a few years later, *Easy,* my first gold. I had no idea I could write!

PLAYBOY: What inspired you?

RICHIE: Money. Remember now: I was the kid who was too slow for baseball, too short for basketball, too slow for track, too light for football — and I wasn't the world's greatest lover. So here was something I *could* do. I suddenly felt good about myself and my confidence level rose. Every song I wrote — *Just To Be Close To You, Sail On, Easy, Three Times A Lady* — tapped more and more of my insides. Writing was like therapy. Suddenly, I wasn't shy about spilling my guts to people in songs — though I wouldn't tell people what I was feeling face to face.

PLAYBOY: Were the Commodores supportive of you as a composer?

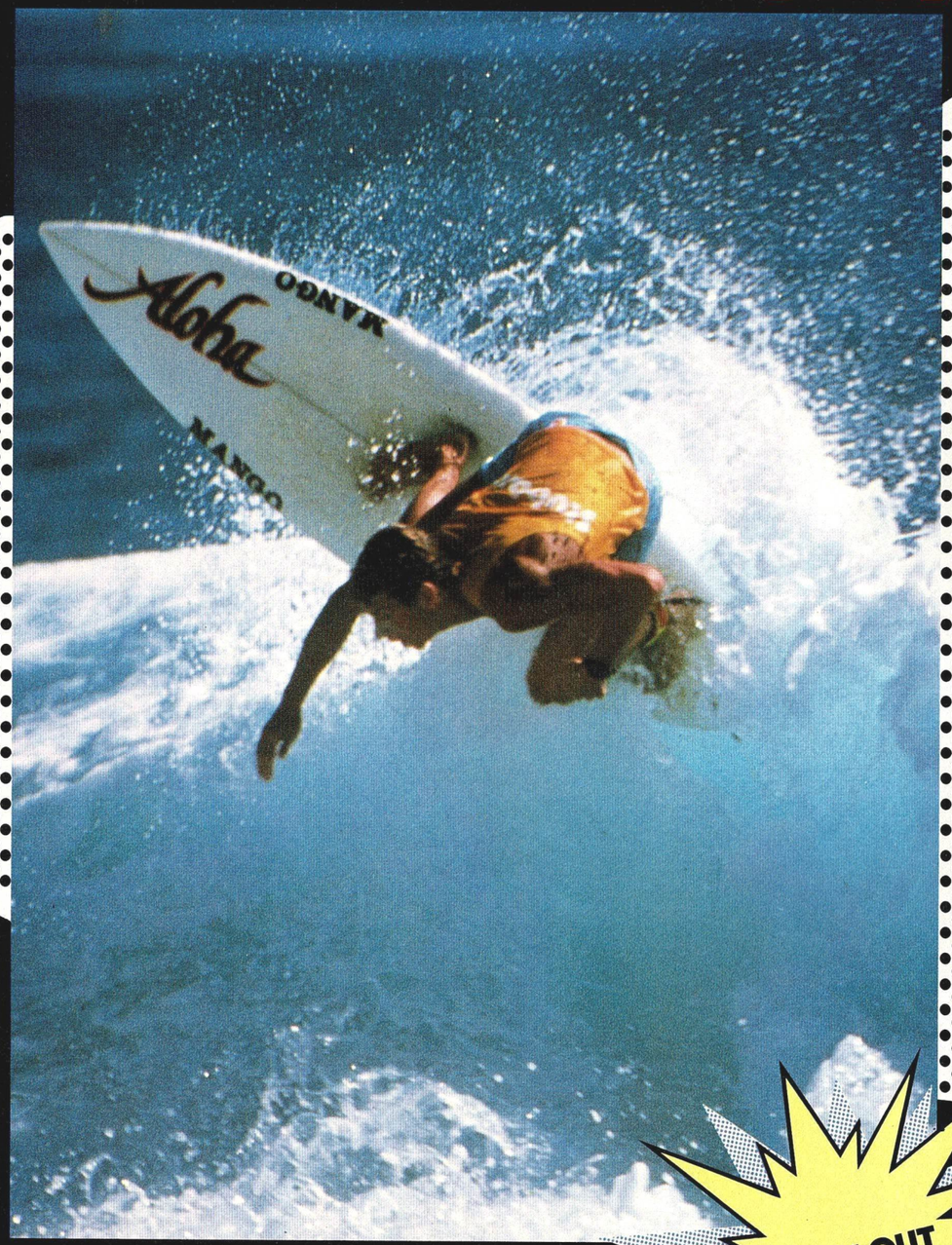
RICHIE: Absolutely, at least at the beginning. Every time I wrote something that was successful, they'd say: "There you go, Lionel. Do it again."

PLAYBOY: According to the manager of the Commodores, by 1981 the group was begging you to leave. You were agreeing to concert dates and recordings and then cancelling. You were "fucking them up" endlessly and they wanted you out. Is that how it was?

RICHIE: They didn't beg me to leave — I left. That was a real love-hate wrestling match. I was looking desperately for acceptance from the group. Imagine: we started out as equal partners — $100 a man per week. I was the last one you'd expect to succeed, I was the guy who ironed the shirts and uniforms — the jokester. But as my ballads became more popular, we began to fight. The group would say: "We don't want your song," because they figured it was going to be a hit single. It happened with *Lady*. By then, the anger had built up in me, we weren't speaking, and I thought to myself: "You don't want it? Fuck you. Well, here we go,

(continued on page 115)

NO WAVES-NO SURF!



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PLAYBOY'S

AUSSIE RULES PREDICTIONS

Our forecasts for the season.

1987 IS THE most important year in Australian football since 1897, which was the first season of the Victorian Football League (VFL). The VFL

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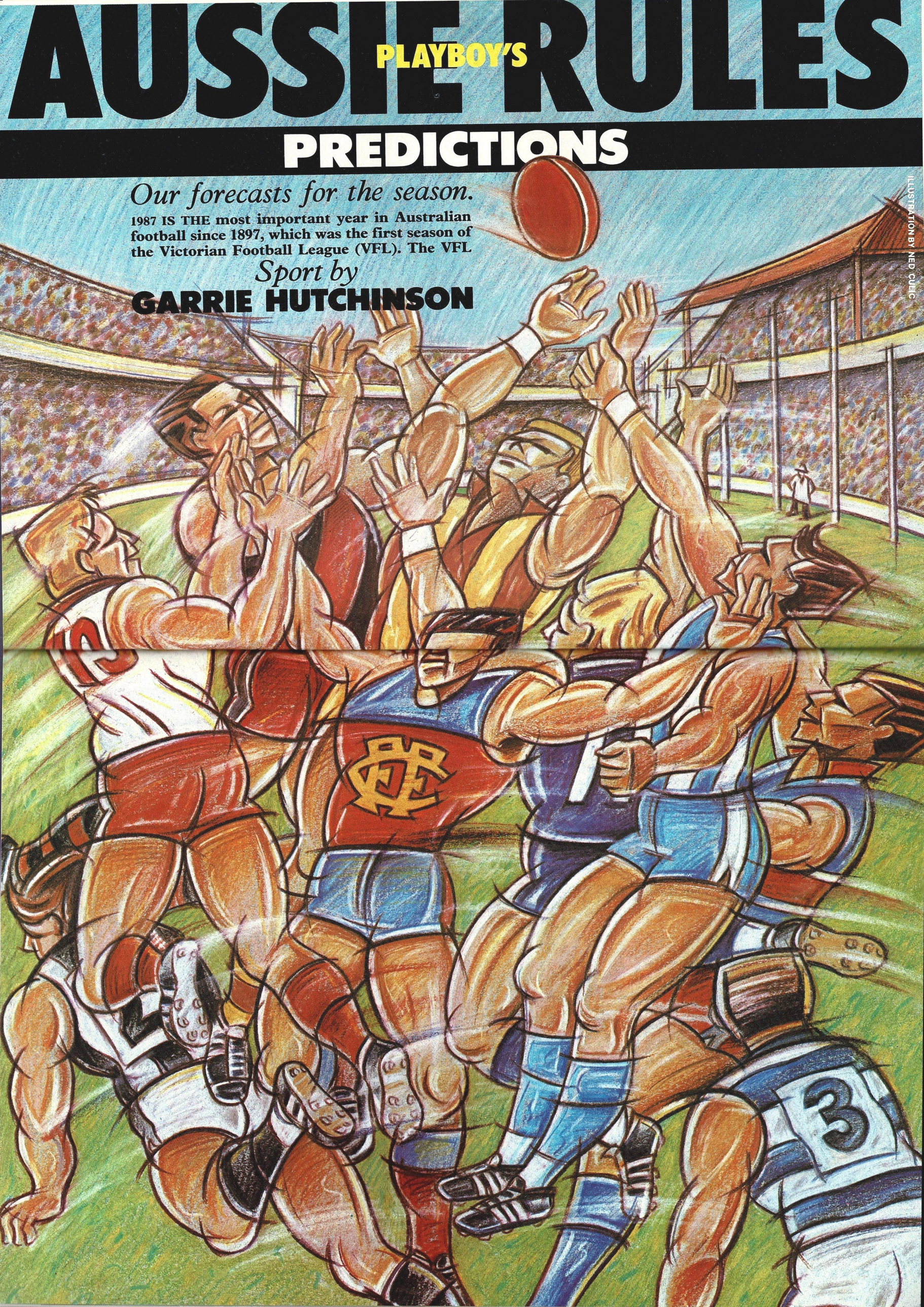


ILLUSTRATION BY NED CULIC

broke away from the existing football organisation back then to form a more professional, better organised and more progressive football business. Those are more or less the aims of the new "national" VFL.

The more emotional supporters of the Australian game back in 1897 are supposed to have had as a motto, "one nation, one flag, one code of football". We wouldn't put it quite as bluntly as that, but the nationalist urge is still part of what is going on, even if what we have is in fact an expanded Victorian competition, controlled and franchised from Victoria, with teams representing four states.

The idea of the new VFL was born as much out of a desperation to save what the game has become, the history, the power, the relationships the game has forged, as it was out of anything high-minded. The truth is that the game in Melbourne has been on the rack for 10 years, and had the wanton spending, the inefficiencies and the sheer selfish loopiness of the individual clubs continued, it would have expired in a graveyard of bankruptcy and action in the courts.

Something had to be done. It was clear that crowds had to be attracted back to the game, which meant that big games had to be played at grounds with facilities to support them. Money needed to be raised from sponsorship and television rights by expanding the football market. Some power had to be taken from the hands of the individual clubs for the sake of the overall code. The transfer and contracting of players had to be made legal and the arrangements made clear to everyone. Grounds needed to be developed (and fewer of them), and player payments brought under control.

In the past few seasons, much of this has begun. The game is controlled by the VFL Commission. There are fewer grounds. South Melbourne have moulted into the Sydney Swans. The amount that clubs can spend on player payments has been restricted by the "salary cap".

And most importantly of all, and after a good deal of agony, two new clubs have been admitted to the competition, the West Coast Eagles and the Brisbane Bears. The licence money from them, a total of $8m, or some $667,000 to each of the 12 existing VFL clubs, has been a boon, and has staved off the financial collapse of a few of them. But the result is a far from ideal 14-team competition, with an unsatisfactory draw where not all teams play each other twice. Just how long a couple of the Melbourne clubs survive without merger or worse remains to be seen.

At least the football will be exciting. Games will be played on Friday and Monday nights, and Saturday and Sunday afternoons, in Brisbane, Sydney, Geelong, Melbourne and Perth. We won't be able to go anywhere without seeing a game, either live or on television. The big men will fly all over the country, at some cost to the homegrown Melbourne barracker who now finds himself watching the footy like Americans and the British do — on TV — with the rarer "home" games more of a treat than a regular habit.

To mark this football revolution, we have instituted a combined footy form guide and crystal ball *(see below)*. It's an unashamedly prejudiced view of who will be in the final five, based on form, and the movements of players known, as they say, at the time of writing. Football clubs are more secretive than ASIO, so anything could happen by the time the season commences. But short of 10 Essendon players moving to St Kilda, we'll stick by the predictions.

Broadly, there will be three levels of competition. At the top will be Essendon, Carlton and Hawthorn. The next layer is Fitzroy, West Coast, Collingwood, North Melbourne, Sydney and Footscray to fight out fourth and fifth. At the bottom are Brisbane, Geelong, Richmond, Melbourne and St Kilda.

VICTORIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

THE FINALS:

ELIMINATION FINAL: Fitzroy defeat West Coast Eagles.
QUALIFYING FINAL: Carlton defeat Hawthorn.
FIRST SEMI FINAL: Fitzroy defeat Hawthorn.
SECOND SEMI: Essendon defeat Carlton.
PRELIMINARY FINAL: Carlton defeat Fitzroy.
GRAND FINAL: Essendon v Carlton.

THE LAST LADDER

after home and away games:

1. Essendon.
2. Carlton.
3. Hawthorn.
4. Fitzroy.
5. West Coast Eagles.
6. Collingwood.
7. North Melbourne.
8. Sydney Swans.
9. Footscray.
10. St Kilda.
11. Richmond.
12. Geelong.
13. Melbourne.
14. Brisbane Bears.

IMPROVERS: Essendon, West Coast Eagles, and St Kilda.
DECLINERS: Sydney, Brisbane Bears.
PREDICTIONS: 14 wins to make final five.
7 wins for the wooden spoon.
2 games separate fourth and ninth.

West Coast overawed by atmosphere and the fanatical Fitzroy barrackers (and team) lose a close game. Fitzroy on a roll account for a seemingly uninterested Hawthorn, and Essendon cream Carlton after a tough first quarter. Carlton get back to something more like their proper form and easily account for a tired Fitzroy. In the Grand Final, Carlton jump to a big early lead but are worn down in a savage third quarter, kick a couple toward the end to go into the last a kick in front — and hold on to win. But then the writer is a Carlton barracker who always lives in hope, despite everything. In recent years it seems to take a losing Grand Final to pave the way for a win — as has happened with Essendon and Hawthorn.

BRISBANE BEARS

Can a team with a koala on its chest actually play football? Apart from the well-known fact that koalas aren't bears at all but lovable marsupials, there is the question of the team. It would have to be said that with one or two exceptions, coach Peter Knights' material is of the second rank. Players like former Bombers Peter Banfield and Chris Waterson weren't regulars when Essendon were on top, and seem unlikely to sprout instantly in the sub-tropical climate of Brisbane, though stranger things have happened. Gary Shaw was sought by Collingwood as a bloke who could kick them to a premiership, but injury and lack of form meant he cost a bomb, and played like one. He doesn't inspire confidence, and neither does ex-Tiger Phillip Walsh, ex-Hawk Michael McCarthy, or ex-Cat Stephen Reynoldson. They all might prove me wrong.

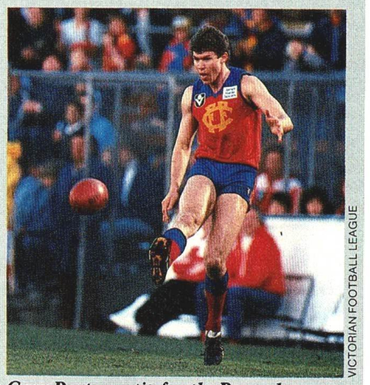
Former Collingwood captain Mark Williams is the best of the recruits, and should provide plenty of on-field inspiration for the Bears. Courage and team spirit are things that will be needed nearly as much as a big ruckman. Williams will no doubt be ruck rover, and former Bulldog and Swan Jim Edmond will take on the job at centre half forward. He'll need to be a lot more consistently brilliant than he has been in the past. Geoff Raines, now at his fourth club, still has several top seasons left in his body and, provided he has the interest, should prove a real pest for other teams with his experience and big left-footers from centre.

But three or four top players do not a top five team make. Knights, football manager Shane O'Sullivan and frontman Paul Cronin talk a lot about building a football family in Brisbane. But there's nothing more debilitating of that aim than constantly losing. Even 11 home games out of 22 matches mightn't help when the home is so new. Given the problems of welding a team together with just four or five new players, starting from scratch seems too much of a task to me.

PREDICTION: The Bears will at least make St Kilda happy by relieving them of the wooden spoon. Fourteenth.

BROWNLOW MEDAL FROM:

Dermott Brereton (Hawthorn), Gerard Healy (Sydney), Kevin Walsh (Essendon), Doug Hawkins (Footscray), Paul Harding (West Coast), Craig Bradley (Carlton), Peter McConville (St Kilda), Darren Millane (Collingwood), Jim Krakouer (North Melbourne), Gary Ablett (Geelong) and Gary Pert (Fitzroy).
Pert to win.



VICTORIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

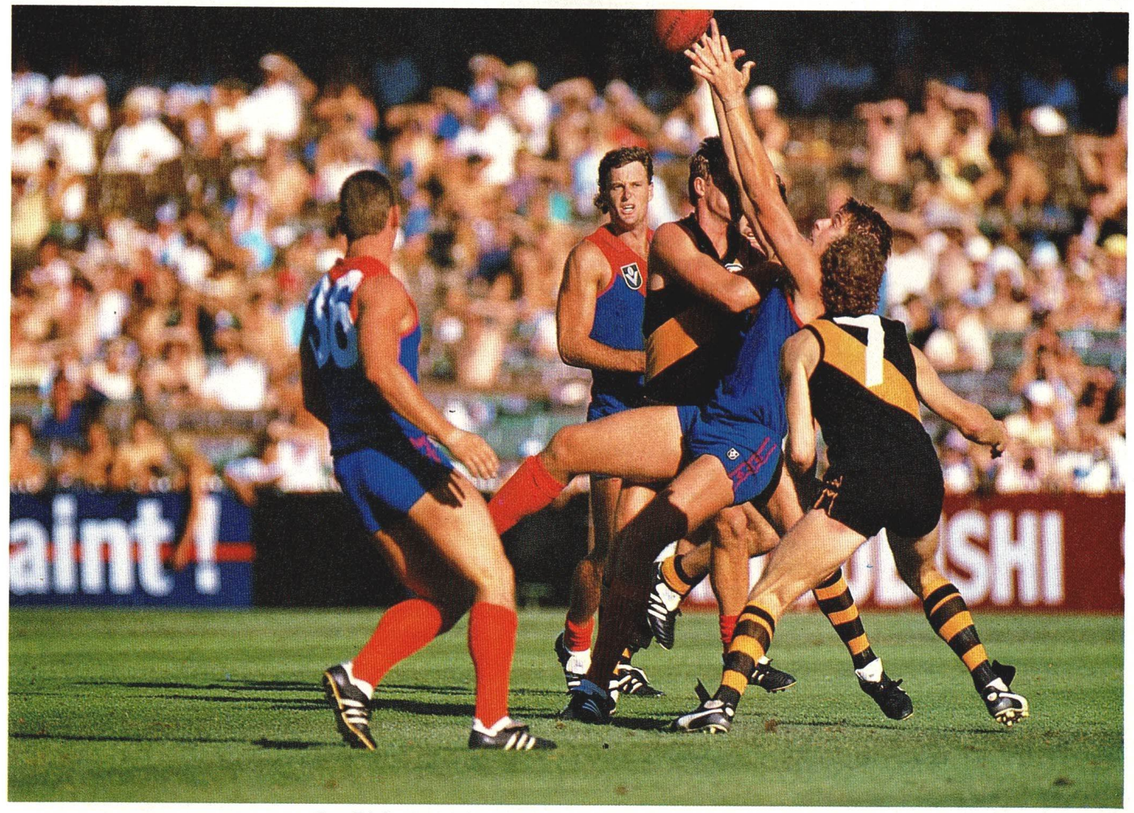
Gary Pert, our tip for the Brownlow Medal.

CARLTON

Carlton played their worst game in a decade in the 1986 Grand Final, despite having recruited better than any other team in the competition, and seemingly having run into winning form against Hawthorn. Some of that showing has to be put down to Hawthorn's ruthless play, and to destiny, but also to the inexperience of new boys such as Bradley, Kernahan, Dorotich and Motley. Not to mention the lack of a pair of tough rovers.

Much of this has been remedied for 1987. Once again the Carlton recruiting system with its bottomless wallet has been at work, and another quartet of ready-made (it seems) players will compete for a place in the team. Peter Sartori, Stephen Da Rui and Richard Dennis from the West, and Mark Naley from South Australia will more than make up for the retirement of Mark Maclure, and the sale of Ken Sheldon and Alex Marcou to St Kilda, and the fading from the list of Bruce Reid, Michael Aitken and Peter Kenny. Nothing could make up for the loss of the legendary Bruce Doull.

With a year in the VFL, the 1986 recruits should be ready for even better things,



VICTORIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Two Richmond defenders attempt to spoil a Melbourne mark.

especially Peter Motley, who only had half a season because of injury. He looked to be potentially the best of the lot. If Kernahan can mark more consistently at centre half forward, if Bradley can get the footy in the hard games, if Dorotich can be five percent tougher at centre half back — and rover Mark Nally fits in with forward pocket rover Bernie Evans, and ruckman Justin Madden hits the ball to them. . . then. . .

Veterans Wayne Johnston and Wayne Harmes played better in 1986 than they had for several years, Ken Hunter and David Rhys-Jones each played two or three absolute blinders and Stephen Silvagni and Mil Hanna will, with luck, have seasons uninterrupted by illness and injury.

Coach Robert Walls is one of the smartest and most inventive coaches around, and he seems to be relaxed enough to allow brilliant and eccentric players to do some of their own thing, as well as to be part of a flexible team system. When playing well, Carlton is one of the most exciting teams in the comp to watch.

And Carlton did, after all, make the Grand Final last year, which was a better performance than every other team bar one. That the result was so disappointing is only a measure of the expectations the team aroused.

PREDICTION: Carlton will finish second, but go on to win the Grand Final.

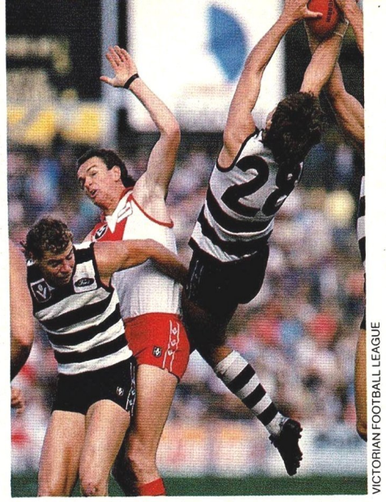
COLLINGWOOD

Despite more upheavals than Mt Vesuvius, Collingwood only missed out on the finals in 1986 on percentage, and by losing a game they should have won against Melbourne in Round 18. Perhaps they wouldn't have gone very far in the finals, but given the circumstances it would have been a great effort — dare one say it, a typical Collingwood effort.

Administrative upheavals, massive debts, player pay cuts, a new coach and sale of star players should have seen on-field effort diminished, but the reverse was the case. New coach and ex-Hawthorn great Leigh Matthews soon had the team playing straightforward but effective football, mostly involving kicking the ball to full forward Brian Taylor. BT obliged with a ton in '86, and the administration has obliged with a small financial surplus.

1987 sees little recruiting, and the loss of '86 captain Mark Williams to Brisbane and Greg Phillips back to South Australia. Add to this the loss to Essendon of Mike Richardson and Geoff Raines (now also in Brisbane) during 1986, and you'd think the team might be on the slide. On the contrary, I believe Collingwood have a bunch of the best young players in the comp, enough to maintain a spot in the middle of the table. They need more big guns, particularly a ruckman and a centre half forward (David Cloke can't be everywhere at once).

But the younger players like Danny Seow, Shane Kerrison, Ron McKeown, Michael Gayfer and Darren Millane, now having



VICTORIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Swans' Tony Daniher attempts to thwart a Geelong high mark.

played one or two seasons, will pull their weight this season. Add to them the brilliance of Peter Daicos, due for a big year, and the five goals a week from Taylor, and there's the making of a successful team, but one that needs three or four stars.

PREDICTION: Collingwood will win more than they lose, but will finish in the bunch a game outside the Five. Sixth.

ESSENDON

Essendon's fall from grace in 1986 was as surprising to every other team as it was to coach Sheedy and the Bombers. It just shows what injury, and a five percent decline in the psychological commitment to training and playing after two consecutive premierships, can do.

In 1987, however, the Bombers will have the brilliant Tim Watson back after a year recovering from a knee injury, as well as a full season from Paul Van Der Haar, everything being equal. It remains to be seen what effect a new knee will have on Watson's speed and manoeuvrability, but he still has the same heart and determination he had before, and that will make him extremely dangerous, hungry and inspirational. Van Der Haar is one of the most spectacular players in the business, at either end of the ground, and now he's fit again he will add that necessary brilliance to the side.

A couple of players missing in '86 can't play as "ordinary" as that again. Paul Salmon, the giant ruckman and full forward, only kicked 46 goals from 20 games last season, a very poor return. He'll be a menace this year. Mark Harvey had a dismal year, after being prominent in the two winning premiership teams, and he's too good to stay down. Terry Daniher, Roger Merrett and the underrated but very mean centre half back Kevin Walsh are top players. Simon Madden is in the veteran class, but, with in-touch rovers like Alan Ezard and Darren Williams, looks a good thing for another season.

I know everyone is a couple of years older than they were when winning those premierships, but my view is that the poor result last season, and the determination of coach Kevin Sheedy to win again, and the fact that player-for-player Essendon is as good as any other team in the competition, and more versatile than most, will get them to the top of the ladder after the home and away games. I don't think they've quite got the new blood to win again, but they will nevertheless be very hard to toss.

PREDICTION: On top after the first round, make the Grand Final, lose it.

FITZROY

Everyone's second-favorite team, Fitzroy's deeds in the final series in 1986 will live long with all footy followers. Their final series started two months before everyone else's, of course, because they had to keep winning in order to stay in it. They won seven out of their last eight games before going down to eventual winners Hawthorn in the Preliminary Final. It was clear by that time, had they got into the Grand Final, the Lions would have had great difficulty fielding a fit team.

They haven't lost anyone of importance, and there is no reason to believe they can't do it all again in 1987, whether Bernie Quinlan plays or not. They still have the best defender in the competition, Gary Pert, whose sure hands, attacking frame of mind, quick football brain and courage ought to win him the Brownlow *this* year. In front of him at centre half back is a player very nearly as good, Paul Ross. Next to Pert in the pocket is another one, Grant Lawrie.

On the wing is the remarkable Mark Dwyer, who came to Fitzroy from Koroit last year, walked straight into the team in the middle of the season, and played like he'd been there for 10 years. On the forward line is that enigmatic tank Michael Conlan, who might only get one kick sometimes, but it'll result in a goal and win the game. There are the Harris brothers and the Osbornes, and Matt Rendell in the ruck and they all play together as if their lives depended on it. That's the secret of Fitzroy, and one that coach David Parkin admires and works with. They never know when to give in.

Despite the somewhat parlous financial situation, meaning that little recruiting has been done, I believe the move to settled playing accommodation for home games at Princes Park will more than make up for that. This ground has a good football-playing atmosphere which is worth a goal or two for the home team. And an increase in the number of supporters as well.

PREDICTION: A settled side, playing well together now with a future as a Melbourne club — as long as they keep winning. I put Fitzroy at a sentimental third after the finals, though the crystal ball says that they might fall in a heap too, and be replaced by Sydney.

FOOTSCRAY

After the glories of 1985, last year was a

(continued on page 97)

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RON NEWMAN

GREAT BRITON

London actress Marina Baker's lines are unlikely to be soon forgotten.

At the time we met up with actress Marina Baker she'd just bought a flat in London. Marina told us all about her mortgage, assorted bills, finance brokers, interest rates and how she saves most of what she earns. "I suppose I'm a yuppie," she said. "The yuppies here are thriving more than most Sloane Rangers, meaning certain upper-class types who live near Sloane Square, a posh area of London. I'm not a Sloane but I'm invited to their dinner parties. You know, 'Marina's an actress — she's so amusing,' and all that."

Marina has been playing Priscilla Beaulieu Presley in the long-running musical-theatre production of *Forever Elvis*. "And when I'm not acting," she says, "the time I have is not spare. I'm taking singing lessons, trying to find time to ride horseback and to develop a one-woman show. I've done things before that have been very camp, very feminine. I want my solo show to be hard-hitting. Maybe it'll be political — though I don't want to be labelled as political. In the meantime I'm really quite happy in my new flat with nothing to sit on as yet! But I honestly wouldn't want to change anything except, perhaps, my nose. Not really — my nose and I get on quite well now. We've been together 19 years."

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF OCKER* CHIC

THEY LOVE Paul Hogan in Beverly Hills. After *Crocodile Dundee*, they're sending him all the scripts that Harrison Ford doesn't want to do. The Hollywood studio intellectuals have actually read *The Thorn Birds* — all the way through, not just the coverage — and quite a few of them drop into Koala Blue on Melrose after they've had lunch at Trumps or La Mustache. And if all that hadn't attracted their attention, there was Rupert Murdoch buying up half of Twentieth Century-Fox.

Murdoch muscled his way in by waving greenbacks, but Hogan's a natural. He's got the born-innocent Bondi-blue eyes and straw hair and the seamless amber tan and sloppy grin and the cauliflower knees you get from kneeling on a surfboard and the whole who-gives-a-root, she's-apples rogue ocker insouciance he was born with. But it's the verbal they love in LA. That wacky dinki-di slang. And the *vowels* — all those a's and e's and oi's ricocheting off the adenoids and resonating up there in the sinuses like a blowfly caught in a bottle of Chateau Tanunda. It's the way he says *G'day*.

The way he speaks, that dinkum larrikin adenoidal vibrato, is the way whole suburbs here speak. The entire North Shore of Sydney and everybody else with two bob to rub together have been doing their best to *stamp out* that peculiar noise in their sons and daughters ever since the Second World War. But that was before Ocker Chic.

Ocker Chic really became official the day it went international, on October 4, 1983, when Olivia Newton-John opened Koala Blue in Los Angeles. By then, there were agents in Hollywood, hard-hearted men, real ruthless liver-eating hyenas who had menus from Sydney's Berowra Waters Inn in frames. They'd bludged a free trip to Sydney to tell a few funny stories at some movie conference, they'd spent the day on a yacht on Sydney Harbor, and they'd had lunch on the Hawkesbury River. Now they were foaming at the mouth, talking about the oysters and the lobsters and the wine that smelled faintly of passionfruit. They were raving about the women, especially the wild, fresh, amusing and, here was the thing, oddly *intelligent* women, in miniskirts up to here. The word was out, and the word was: if you were looking for the next best thing to heaven on earth, Pan Am 815 flew non-stop to Sydney three days a week.

Forget that Olivia's a ring-in, a phony ocker like the Bee Gees, or Mel Gibson for that matter, or all the other boys and girls of penniless migrants who arrived here when they were 12 and never looked back. As far as anybody in Hollywood was concerned,

Have we killed off the very qualities that made us great? Has Australia lost its beer-besotted soul?

Article by **MICHAEL THOMAS**

ILLUSTRATION BY ROBERT GIUSTI

***Ocker** *(noun): Australian rogue: presumed extinct due to low-alcohol beer and loss of habitat.*

Olivia Newton-John was as dinki-di as, well, Dawn Fraser. But Koala Blue in Hollywood had the real Aussie goods: ETA peanut butter, Vegemite, the full range of I ♡ Australia T-shirts and Ayers Rock T-shirts and hand-knitted merino wool cardigans with a kanga on the back, or a koala or kookaburra, Op'ra House stuff, America's Cup stuff, beach towels spelling out the rules of cricket or the complete lyrics of *Waltzing Matilda*. What was worse, they'd bought into the whole school of graphic design known as Town Black, which was some crybaby art student's idea of Aboriginal cave art.

Stone the crows! It was amazing. Suddenly all this ocker junk had *meaning*. Cling peaches! Jaffas! Minties! Lamingtons! Hoadley's Violet Crumble Bars! Pelaco shirts! Akubra hats! These things had become cultural artifacts. As though Australia had not just a look, not just weather, not just good oysters and cold beer and big surf and funny accents, not just infinite space and light and waterfrontage — but a culture. It was embarrassing. What was next? Jo'burg? Voortrekker Chic? (Mmmmmmm. Come to think of it, the roads are better. And the service, mate, is first class.)

Ocker Chic owed its early speed, not to friendly freckle-faced Paul Hogan, thank you, but to Sydney ad-man and sometime radio host John Singleton. Singo was the architect, the Werner Von Braun of the affair; he lit the match. Singo's a big bodgie with a loud voice and a foul mouth and a chip on his shoulder the size of a mobile home. His view of the fancier things in life came across loud and clear when some dingbat phoned in on the Singo Show and asked him what he thought about Arts and Culture in Australia? "*Geez, mate,*" he goes, "*What race is she in?*"

Singo may have the manners of a professional lawnmower, but he's the closest Australia ever got to an indigenous, white, English-speaking culture. He's the archetypal little battler, with no time for bankrupt European airs and nothing but scorn for trashy American high-rise and hard sell. There used to be a whole nation of men just like him. All the little battler asked out of life was a cooked breakfast and a few beers and a float to take to Randwick to get stuck in to the bookies. Sunday morning, he'd wake up stony broke and still laughing, pull on his navy blue singlet and a pair of daggy shorts, and take the street kids fishing off the rocks. Afterwards he'd light up the barbie on a stretch of empty beach and fry flatheads and yellow-jackets for breakfast.

Nobody dared get *up himself* that far — but there was an ethic here: nobody had any status he couldn't defend. If you didn't see eye to eye with the bloke at the bar, you stepped outside. You didn't discuss it. You settled it. It was rough, but it was just.

What you had here, in the post-war years, up till the big boom in the '60s, was a society unlike any other in the history of the planet. You had equality. You had resolute, doctrinaire mediocrity. If you got a cab, you rode up front with the driver. Everybody shined his own shoes. There were no rungs on the social ladder. There was no ladder. There were only two unforgivable heresies: success and failure.

Failure was shame. All anybody had to do was get out of bed in the morning to make a decent living. The country was so rich and so empty that if you failed to make the grade in Australia you got what you deserved.

Success was worse. Success was subversive. It broke the first unwritten law of mediocrity, which is: no tall poppies. It sounded like hard yakka, like five days a week, or else it was theft. Either way it was unnatural.

Australians, indigenous, white, English-speaking Australians, didn't much like to work. Adults worked. And Australians didn't much like the idea of adulthood. What they liked was adolescence until death.

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It was Singo who first heard the nagging didjeridoo hum in the national marrow. There was a growing need to paint the Union Jack off the flag, change the national anthem, piss off the Queen and the whole embarrassing colonial old pals' act and stand up and be seen among the front-runners, internationally speaking. Singo knew what the mob would put their money down for. He cracked it first in advertising with dreadful slogans like "Whered'ya-geddit?"

Paul Hogan was pulled straight off the Harbor Bridge, which he was painting at the time. Hoges said: "Anyhow, have a Winfield," and Winfield became the market leader. They weren't the world's best cigarettes, but that didn't matter. It was those vowels. He was talking to people in their own language, ocker to ocker, ratbag to ratbag, and it was thrilling. Overnight, after years of being made to feel vaguely ashamed of themselves, Australians looked in the mirror and fell in love.

There were other things. Take Albert Namatjira, the Aboriginal artist. All anybody ever gave Albert Namatjira while he was alive was all the beer he could drink. Namatjira landscapes of Arnhem Land were pure playschool junk, but people began to look at them again. Now they saw space and color and form and naive mystical geometries.

Everything home-grown became precious, achingly significant, invested with patriotic magic. Arnott's Sao biscuits, Sergeants' pies, Ayers Rock, the Harbor Bridge, the Aeroplane Jelly song, 19th century paintings of gum trees, 20th century paintings of gum trees, the gum trees *themselves*.

Ocker Chic really got out of hand when we won the America's Cup. The hum in the national marrow became a 10,000-voice choir singing in tune. This is a country that likes sport. We very nearly quit the Empire in the '30s over a cricket match. Australians read the paper from the back; 100,000 of us turn up every weekend at the Melbourne Cricket Ground to watch Australian rules football, and the biggest-selling record in Australia for years was not Men At Work, not Olivia Newton-John, but some clown doing a foul-mouthed parody of a cricket telecast. Pure Ocker Chic in fact.

But when we won the America's Cup, when skipper John Bertrand came back from the dead and broke the longest winning streak in sporting history, the barrage of popping corks sounded like war breaking out. Great Western champagne had the best day's sales in the history of grapes. By Christ, you should've seen us. If you thought folks in America were a bit worked up when the hostages got back from Tehran, if you thought Mrs Gandhi's funeral got a little out of hand, you should've been in Sydney the day we won The Cup. It was sheer frenzy.

We carried on that way because the America's Cup was unwinnable. It was bolted down in an inner chamber, under glass, and guarded by the Grail Knights of the New York Yacht Club. Bertrand's attack on it was heresy. When he smashed the glass and grabbed the grail, brought it home for the next Cup chase on our own stretch of ocean off Fremantle, he proved once and for all we could do anything. Nothing was beyond us.

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Singo is still defending the larrikin way of life. But he's lost the plot — there's nobody out there in navy blue singlets any more. They're all wearing alligator shirts and running shoes. They're sitting around in butterfly chairs, under the fig tree in the open plan distressed-pine dining-cum-sitting room of their $250,000 home unit with a water view, eating guacamole quiche and drinking low-alcohol beer. And what are they talking about? They're talking about giving up smoking. They're driving Datsuns. Half the people don't even hardly speak the same language.

The bottom's fallen out of rugby league. Nobody wants to watch grown men kick each other's teeth in and gouge each other's eyes out any more, so nobody goes. There are no street fights in Australia any more, either. There are no fighters. No more little battlers. If you went looking for a dinkum ocker little battler these days you'd need a 4-wheel-drive and a Mobil map and a few days to spare. You might just find a few throwbacks at the Silverton Pub on Broken Hill, and you'd be all right in Tibooburra. But you'd be buggered in the cities.

LA's the market leader these days. It's the only alternative to being banned from driving for years. Australia has the lowest, meanest breath-test fail-score in the non-Islamic world: the sniff of a cork and you're

"Is Wendy's precious Ronnie too busy to come to the phone just now?"

over the limit and $50 won't help — these days a traffic cop can cost you four figures.

Up until the early '60s, long before the rot set in, before the Ulterior Agenda took shape, the pubs closed at 6pm, so all you had was an hour after work to down the amber nectar. The Six O'Clock Swill it was called. When the little hand would get to five, everybody would drop everything and stampede for the pub and start sinking schooners. You either had to launch yourself over the pile-up at the line of scrimmage, or get down low and duck and dive and burrow and elbow and somehow worm your way near enough to scream at the barmaid. The noise! The *roar!* These places would hold two or three hundred thirsty ockers all shouting at the top of their voices, bawling in each other's faces, all getting drunker and louder and giddier by the minute.

At 5.30, when the pub was so full you couldn't move an inch and the air was full of smoke and noise and BO, the latecomers would arrive. More and more people, till the big hand crept round to 5.45 and the very latecomers came charging in the door like mad rhinos. There was this sea of jabbing fists full of money, waving frantically in the air, and heads pogo-ing up and down, and a noise that killed fish underwater, a roar like the Superbowl in an eggcup.

When the pubs closed, the streets filled with wild cries and the gutters ran with chunder. Legless drunks came staggering up the street, barking at the pavement, cannoning off the buildings and plate glass, crawling on their hands and knees the last few yards to their cars, fumbling for the keys, spilling change, carrying on these totally blotto conversations, like —

"I'll be buggered."

"You'll be lucky."

"Fuckin' dickhead."

"Who's a fuckin' dickhead?"

"Who d'you think?"

"Don't you fuckin' call me a fuckin' dickhead, you fuckin' dickhead" — and so on. Totally blotto, they'd crawl into the car, shut one eye, and drive home. There were only two ways to drive home in this condition, and that was either dead slow or flat out. Flat out, if you hit something, you had the momentum. Dead slow, limping along at 30km/h in third gear, there was the danger you'd forget where you lived, that you'd blink and fall asleep suddenly.

You have to go a long way to find a pub in Sydney in 1987. The Newcastle and the old Wentworth have been knocked down to make way for the skyline. All the corner pubs have turned into building societies — just to save a few miserable lives.

Road accidents were the daily bread of the Australian popular culture. Without the Wakehurst Parkway, you might never have heard of Rupert Murdoch. It wasn't bums and tits and garottings and scalpings and air conditioners falling from the sky that sold Murdoch's *Daily Mirror*, it was these fantastic front-page pictures of twisted steel and burning rubber and telltale pools of black blood, followed up inside with all the grisliest details — hospital shots, the fatherless kids, the limbless girlfriends, the weeping widows, the grieving mums. Those people in New York think the *Post* is cheap? They think the London *Sun* and the *News Of The World* lower the tone? They should see the *Mirror*, where it all began.

This may not seem so important to you Paul Hogan fans. You may think it a wee bit capricious to decry the passing of multi-car pile-ups and drunken brawling and grown men on their knees being sick in the street. But indigenous, English-speaking, white Australian culture was hatched in the pubs. It was rooted in drunkenness. The jokes, the songs, the poems of Henry Lawson, *The Man From Snowy River* and *The Sentimental Bloke*, the language, and the whole who-gives-a-fuck, she's-apples, rogue ocker insouciance that was the blood and guts of Ocker Chic were born in the boozy democracy of the Six O'Clock Swill. Australia on low-alcohol beer is like a car without gas. It just sits there looking good.

But this low-alcohol subversion isn't the only seditious influence; there's the Wog Channel, for instance. Channel SBS, ethnic TV, is only serving its audience when it puts out all these Egyptian soap operas and Iraqi sitcoms and wacky zero-rating Herzegovinian folk dancing shows. When ockers refer to the immigrant population that now numbers more than half the country as reffos, when they talk of Maltese and Greeks and Cypriots and Kurds and Calabrians and Lebanese and Serbs and Croats and Montenegrans and Herzegovinians and Shi-ites and Sunnis and poor bewildered Salvadoreans as dagos and grease-eating turd-burglers, they're only joking. These people have done wonders.

They've taught the mob how to eat pasta and quiche and falafel. They've brought out the violins: you can hear Mozart and Mendelssohn 24 hours a day on FM. They've raised the tone. Middle-Europeans, wily Hungarians and plausible Poles have built huge conglomerate empires.

And oh my, those Chinese deals! 1997 isn't far off, and all the shrewd Hong Kong money's flooding into Sydney, but you've got to understand the way the Chinese like to play the game. They always give you room to take unfair advantage, a certain latitude to steal. This is to see what you're made of. If you don't steal something, they're not interested. If you steal too much, they couldn't care less. But if you're devious enough, if you've read Confucius and you steal just the right Confucian amount, then you're in business with the best and the sky's the limit. The Chinese like *buildings*, and they like them big with all the lights on. They're sinking untold zillions into the skyline. Not to mention our Japanese friends: all the Hitachi personnel are quietly colonising the garden suburbs. These people have made the country prosper.

What ocker malcontents are muttering about — because they don't want to be overheard by the Hitachi personnel at the next table — is this: half the population hardly even speak the same language. It was funny to start with. There were books about the pratfalls of a newly landed migrant from Italy. The first cappuccino machines drew a crowd just to watch them steam and hiss. Even when the Croats started blowing up Yugoslav Airlines it had its amusing side: the airline's office was a maildrop for the Slav community and one poor devil actually had his legs blown off in one attack, came back the next year and had his *artificial* legs blown off.

What began in the '60s is now past the post. Nobody talks about New Australians any more. It's bad taste and it's out of date — the mongrels are in charge. The little battler's lost the plot. As they rewrote the known world before his very eyes along brighter, more TV-like lines, and the new hybrid society shrugged off doctrinal mediocrity and surrendered to the dizzy delights of status envy — the extra leg-room in Clipper Class, the faultless engineering of the 280SL, etc — as social ladders sprouted like oil rigs, the indigenous, white, English-speaking culture retreated into truculent pockets of resistance, with small cells of paranoid men and women clinging to the wreckage. A few of the boys started putting some of the more inflammatory graffiti into effect and beating up boat people, who struck back with shiny knives.

This is the unacceptable face of Ocker Chic, the creepy paranoid streak that came out of the closet when we won The Cup. This is the sharp end of flag-waving national pride. It peaked at the eleventh hour, just as the tide was turning and the little battler and all he ever stood for were left standing on the shore with his pants rolled up round his ankles, shaking his puny fist at the ocean. Ocker Chic, in this sense, offered a last fling, a last defiant adolescent rapture before the curtain came down for good.

Welcome to Australia in the '80s. It's bliss. A lot like California, but without the obvious drawbacks. Lovely homes, big pools, plenty of Porsches, and you can still live your whole life in shorts and thongs. Champagne's dirt cheap. The surf's big, the oysters are good, the sun shines, the Op'ra House is divine. There's money to burn. If it reminds the Americans of somewhere else, then that's the point.

If you like ironies, this is it: as Ocker Chic sweeps the civilised world and all an Australian has to do is open his mouth and eyes light up round the room, here's a memo to all you Paul Hogan fans — you missed it. Tough luck. It's all a dream. It's not there anymore.

Crisisweek

THE SKY IS FALLING

Plus: Toxic toothpaste, breast milk that kills, your radioactive pet and much, much worse!

ILLUSTRATION BY GUY BILLOUT

THE CRISIS CRISIS

It's bad news, biblical style: plagues of swarming journalists are swallowing — and selling — every doomsday scenario in sight.

Picture a crowded bar. Three televisions hang from the ceiling, each tuned in to a different channel. This is a hi-tech joint, so there are competing amusements, as well: rock videos on wall-sized monitors, duelling juke boxes, video games with synthetic voices. On top of this racket, there's the festive roar of conversation.

That is, until the news comes on. Talk stammers to a halt, and eyes are cast upward, they dart from screen to screen. The news readers begin to talk loud, and they're talking crisis — drugs, vanishing rain forests, terrorism, Armageddon. They're inflating stories to 10 times their natural size, descrying the end of the world. Their graphics are flashier than video games, their footage better than MTV, their high-tension talk scarier than sci-fi.

In the face of this onslaught, the patrons can't concentrate, they can't even think. Aghast, afraid, they gulp their drinks as the hysteria level rises.

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When they've got a crisis to hawk, news magazines love to start stories in italics. In that typeface, they can get away with anything: apocalyptic fiction just like the preceding paragraphs that would otherwise be out of place in straight journalism. Italic type can also clear the way for a single anecdote to stand in for the latest trend that's ravaging society, and it lays the groundwork for paragraphs that begin: "The sad story of Bob J. is all too familiar in the country today. He represents an insidious epidemic that is sweeping Australia. . ."

Our newspapers, news magazines and TV newsreaders would have us believe we are suffering an epidemic of disasters unseen since the biblical plagues in Egypt. In the attack of the killer trends, we are terrified on Monday by a crisis we scarcely knew existed the previous Friday, and Monday's dark portent, in turn, gives way to the next week's hysteria.

In horrific succession, herpes anxiety is overtaken by the plague of AIDS, which is followed by the shocking spectre of Third World debt. After a brief but chilly nuclear winter, we are threatened by our *own* national debt crisis, devastated by starvation in Ethiopia, then it's back to a crack in the ozone. Terrorists are suddenly in our midst, then it's sanctions against South Africa, and then both are swept away by crack mania.

The problems appear, the alarms sound, the cover stories and special reports proliferate. Then the media lose interest, and it's on to the next disaster. The phenomenon is so pernicious, it's worthy of a cover story all its own: call it *The Crisis Crisis.*

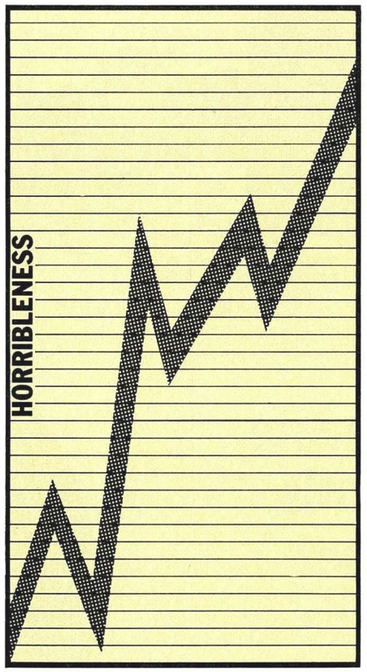
Nobody would tell you our bloated national debt is a healthy sign, that AIDS is a passing annoyance, or that crack is good for you. These are serious problems deserving of serious reporting and concerted follow-through. If only that would happen.

No, the Crisis Crisis is not a matter of what's reported, it's a matter of who reports the bad news and how. This new menace springs from the number of news outlets competing to force tragic trends down our throats, and the vehemence with which they deliver the goods.

The September 15, 1986, *Time* told us that amidst the proliferation of drug abuse, "we really are in the midst of a national crisis." The previous autumn. *Time* had descried the state of liability insurance in numbingly similar terms: "a rising flood of problems growing out of what has become a new national crisis." *Newsweek* easily matched the hysteria level of its competitor, asserting in the August 18, 1986, issue that radon gas is "the most dangerous source of radiation" (a window fan in contaminated homes turned out to be the solution). The radon scare followed on the heels of a classic in slam-dunk Crisis Crisis delivery by no less a source than *Newsweek* editor-in-chief Richard W. Smith. In the June 16, 1986, edition he wrote that drug abuse is "as pervasive and as dangerous in its way as the plagues of medieval times".

If the editor wanted to talk drug plague, he needed to look no further than the 1920s, when cocaine use was far more widespread than it is today. The editor was right to identify a plague, but it doesn't have anything to do with drugs,

It's Getting Worse



the use of which has remained pretty constant in the 1980s. The swarming creatures gnawing on the landscape these days are not locusts, but news-hungry journalists, and they are truly omnivorous beasts. Fuelling their appetites is the intense competition for attention, both from the public and from the all-important advertisers.

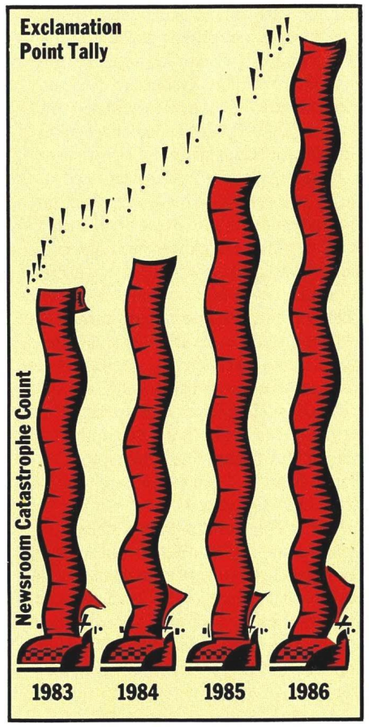
When *Newsweek*'s bottom line dipped recently, its hysteria level rose; suddenly, sunshine could kill the sexy babe it put on its cover, and unmarried 40-year-old women were "more likely to be killed by a terrorist" than to find a husband . The magazine was driving the cocaine bandwagon from the start, with three 1986 cover stories on the subject.

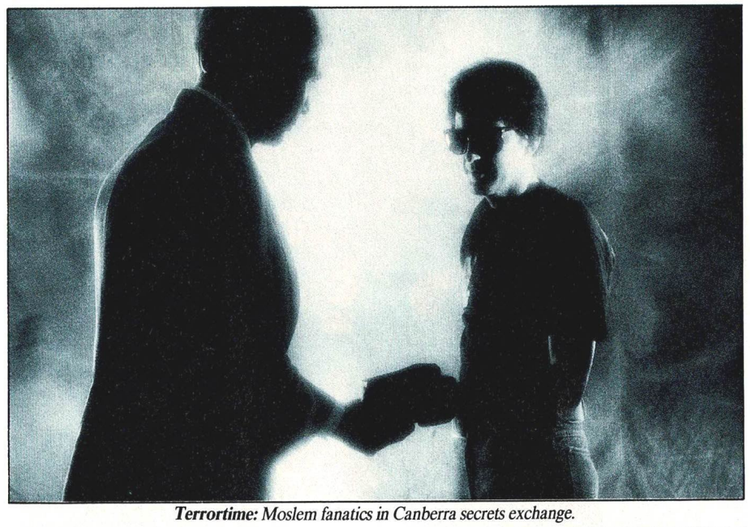
Time was in there slugging as well, nearly matching *Newsweek*'s torrid pace on drug coverage, as well as finding poison in the water of America and shrieking about the insurance crisis.

The news weeklies weren't the only media giants screaming for an audience. The television channels may be the loudest of all the contributors to the current noise level. As the fight for ad revenue becomes tougher and one personality after another gets dumped, their news departments have become pressure points. The same competition that has escalated the newsreaders into mega-buck jobs is egging on these newly minted media superstars, causing them to lend their raised voices to inflated crises worthy of their inflated salaries.

Clearly, the TV stations have given their

The Crisis Index





Terrortime: *Moslem fanatics in Canberra secrets exchange.*

Male Delivery: *Inner-Sydney gays spread AIDS through casual contact.*

Heroin Freaks: *Kings Cross addict makes his connection.*

News Junkies: *Average family implodes after nightly news overkill.*

customers what they wanted when they wanted it, which is the first rule of merchandising. But when the product being sold is the news, that age-old hustle takes on a whole new meaning.

Never mind that the public might actually believe the hyperbole that they see and read. The greater problem is that impressionable politicians might actually believe it. And rather than treat a serious problem with a well-thought-out plan, they settle for frenzied half-measures and hocus pocus. Can *any* problem be solved this way?

Savvy politicians play the hysteria game another way as well. Aware that the press is always up for a good scream, President Reagan was able to score points against the Evil Empire in the hours after the downing of KAL Flight 007, charging that the Soviets willfully shot down a planeload of innocents. By the time the hysteria died down, when the magazine covers turned to other things, it was revealed that the Soviets had simply made a tragic mistake. In addition, the US government intelligence gatherers knew it was a mistake, as did Reagan. They wouldn't admit this in the glare of a crisis, mind you. Why waste the spotlight?

During the Gaddafi hysteria, the press was fully lathered to accept State Department-manufactured assertions of Libya's intended terrorist activities, and it ate up the fiction that the US bombing raid had weakened "Mad Dog" Gaddafi's grip on his government. The crisis machinery was already in place and functioning, waiting for the next bit of news to pump up.

In a telling bit of timing, the strike itself took place at two o'clock in the morning Libya time, which was seven o'clock in the evening New York time. And there was American newsman Dan Rather, encouraging his Tripoli correspondent to hold his microphone out the window so the American public could hear the 12 minutes of mayhem. At 7.20, Larry Speakes was in the press room, waging media war.

Reflecting on the whole mess, prominent US politician Jim Wright was prompted to say, "One of the unfortunate by-products of the television age is the short attention span of the public. We walk along fat, dumb and happy until a crisis grabs us by the throat. Once it is off the front burner or nightly television coverage we go back to sleep."

So it is that the wave beyond The Crisis Crisis takes shape: dismissal by cover story. Once *Time* covers the famine in Ethiopia, we can forget about it. After *60 Minutes* tackles nuclear war, the bombs disappear. Under the new system, crises will simply spend their few minutes in the spotlight, grant interviews all around, and then gracefully retire.

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We're back in the bar again, as you can tell by this italic type. With all of the TVs blaring, the din of crisis-managering has increased to a heavy-metal sonic boom. But the patrons no longer look frightened. They've stopped watching the monitors; they're numb to the very latest causes for hysteria. But that's what happens in noisy bars; turn up the sound loud enough and you'll deafen the customers.

— PETER MOORE

PAUL DICKSON

A Guide to Crisis Journalese

In recent years I have become fascinated with journalese, the professional jargon of journalists. It is an amusing but often deceptive tongue that requires careful translation. For instance, there is the way journalists describe people: ebullient usually means crazy, outgoing means noisy, rubenesque is fat, spry means not in a wheelchair, and ruddy-faced means drunk. If you are called "crusty" in print, it means the writer thinks you are obnoxious.

There are also rules concerning words, phrases and verbal tricks that are trotted out when a crisis is being invented. Carefully deployed, the devices below can build a swarming of termites or a flooded basement into the breathless stuff of a news magazine cover story, a front-page special article or a *60 Minutes* report.

1. **Alliteration Adds Anxiety:** Poets, playwrights, prosecutors and politicians have long known that drama is drummed up when sounds at the beginning of words are repeated. (What is worse than "aiding and abetting" an enemy?) So it is not quite by chance that we have crisis headlines about "Crack And Crime", "Faltering Farms", "Troubled Thrifts" and "Kids and Coke". The D-words make a special contribution at disaster time: where would journalists be without death and destruction, doom and despair, diseased and dispirited, dull and dreary, and drunk and disorderly to move the proceedings along?

2. **Hyphenate for the Double-Whammy Effect:** Hyphenated words always give a special pop to the proceedings. "Gangland-style" murders are more alarming than garden variety killings, but not quite as scary as those deemed to be "execution-style". A term like "ill-fated" has a much greater sense of doom to it than ill or fated have when standing alone. The hyphen can also help cast doubt on something, as in "so-called" and "self-styled". Then there is the drama of "little-known" (used when a reporter is showing off and saying "Here is something I know, but you don't") and "long-awaited" (which often means nothing more than recently announced). Two sure crisis boosters are "ever-increasing" and "ever-mounting", which invariably amplify problems and casualties.

Crisis writing always benefits from a dire prediction of how bad the problem will be in the year 2000.

3. **Pumping Prefixes:** Many are used — mega-, neo-, super-, hyper-, etc — but the most effective may be over-. It all started with "overkill", which was first applied to nuclear war but is now used for any excess no matter how piddling. (One well-known metropolitan newspaper recently carried an article on "sewer overkill".). One must now say "overcrowded" in all articles about crises in schools, mental institutions and prisons. Similarly, "overcommercialised" is becoming the pumped-up descriptor for things like Christmas, the America's Cup, the Olympics and popular tourist attractions.

4. **Mix 'n' Match Metaphors:** When crisis looms, journalists call out the metaphors. For instance, a problem to be studied by a committee becomes a crisis to be attacked by a task force. A proper piece of crisis reporting requires the use of terms from each of the three favorite metaphorical groups:

MILITARY

Frontal Attack, Defeat/Surrender, Task Force, Battle, Invasion, Casualties, Strike.

MEDICAL

Epidemic, Terminal, Cancer(ous), Festering, Ailing, Hemorrhaging, Surgical.

RELIGIOUS

Born-again, Crusade, Evangelical, Missionary, Armageddon, Doomsday, Apocalypse.

5. **The Romance Of High Numbers:** In crisis journalism, numbers should be expressed early, often and high, and only in deaths or dollars. The wildly wrong death-count offered up immediately after the initial hours of the Chernobyl accident in Russia has done nothing to suppress the appetite for big, early returns. Consider **street value**, the term used to alert readers to an upcoming, fantastic estimate of the value of a recently seized cache of drugs. Has anyone ever seen an explanation for how street value is determined? Do news organisations keep junkies on staff for this purpose?

6. **Negating Positives:** Panacea is a word that is now journalistically welded to lines such as, "It is not a panacea, he warned." Ditto for the increasingly scarce (some say extinct) "easy answers" and "cure-alls". Paradise can only be used positively in articles on travel or religion, but if there is a crisis in Sweden, Noosa, a Caribbean nation or Club Med the rule is that the reporter must bring in the negative, preferably in a headline such as "Paradise Lost" or "Trouble In Paradise". Crisis journalese requires an assertion that "Band-Aid solutions" will not work and the crisis at hand cannot be solved by "throwing money at it". Technical and scientific help is possible but inevitably "years away". Perhaps not until after the year 2000.

7. **The Year 2000:** Crisis writing always benefits from a dire prediction of how bad the problem will be in the year 2000 unless something is done now. The beauty of the year 2000 is that it is just far enough away that we will have forgotten the dire predictions by the time it rolls around.

8. **There's No Word Like A Buzzword:** Problems are *passé*; use the word "crisis" at all times. Solutions are for mathematicians; "Draconian measures" are far more appropriate. When possible journalists compare the crisis to (a) Watergate, (b) Vietnam, (c) Darwin's Cyclone Tracy, or (d) Chernobyl. They quote "noted authorities" and "some observers", who can be counted on to say that the crisis may be worse than is generally acknowledged. If an institution is involved, they say that it is "troubled" and/or "beleaguered". If there is a phone number to be called it's always a "hot line", if a committee is appointed it must be a "blue ribbon" panel and anyone given authority to deal with the problem will be called a "czar" who has "unprecedented powers".

9. **Pandora's Press Box:** The opening of Pandora's Box has a nice fatalistic twist if one wants to suggest a host of new ills and evils which are about to be released on a crisis-weary world.

VICTIMS OF PRESS STRESS

Stan H. and his wife Gloria slump dejectedly in the squalor of their once merely unkempt suburban home, their vacant eyes fixed on the television screen.

They both know that they are helpless victims of something awful, but they're not sure exactly what, as they haven't yet seen a thing about it in *Time* or *The Bulletin*.

"Once we were a special kind of family," says Stan bitterly. "You know, a family not trapped in an ever-deepening nightmare spiral of fear, anguish and horror."

Lost in their frenzy, they both begin to rock rhythmically back and forth, emitting the hackle-raising, defeated moan that is the characteristic cry of crisis-crisis victims.

Their three children, Jane, 15, Bryan, 10, and little Willard (a wizened toddler sad beyond his years), are locked in the air-purified, multi-disaster resistant fallout shelter in the basement to protect them from the plague of virulent crises ravaging society.

Gloria's digital wristwatch starts beeping; she stands bolt upright. "Testing!" she screams. "It's testing time!"

Scrambling to the basement, the panicky couple bursts into the fallout shelter. "Okay, kids, fill up these specimen bottles," says Stan. Gloria, checking for radiation with a geiger counter, pauses to shine a flashlight up Bryan's nostrils.

"You haven't succumbed to the nightmare of crack addiction, the number one menace in Australia today, have you?" she demands.

"Aw, Mum," Bryan whines. "You don't sniff it, you smoke it."

"Aha!" his mother cries. "How did you know that?"

"Television."

"Good God!" shouts Stan, stricken numb with terror. "Where's Jane?"

Bryan reveals that he saw his older sister sneak off to school.

"But school," Gloria sobs. "It's full of crime, illiteracy, rap music, satanic cults and secular humanist values."

"We've got to save her," says Stan.

"You're right," says Gloria.

But neither moves toward the door. Instead, they resume that terrible moan, a sound so irritating that bystanders frequently become agitated to the point of homicide — a fact which, expert crisis theorists now believe, may very possibly result in Australia's worst crisis yet: a crisis-crisis victim victimisation crisis.

— LEWIS GROSSBERGER

ILLUSTRATION BY FRANTS KANTOR

STARTING A WINE CELLAR

Richard Beckett advises on the best put-downs.

STARTING A WINE cellar is rather like starting a new relationship: there's a certain amount of both fun and pain involved. Sometimes things go sour and sometimes you can get into a terrible argument. But no matter what happens, it's one of life's crazy experiences and something to talk about in the boozer, as long as you remember one very important point: there's no money in it.

I say this because what might as well be called The Great Australian Wine Scam reached its peak just under 10 years ago now. It was an era when most Australians came to believe that no matter what you bought (whether it was wine, paintings, diamonds or vintage dirty postcards), if you threw it into the back of a cupboard for a few years and then trotted it out in some sort of sale you would automatically make a small fortune.

That proved to be not quite the case, especially with wine. So a lot of people became very savage about the matter and went back to buying

wine for the moment and the moment only. Anyone who boasted about possessing a wine cellar was regarded as something of a loony — wasting valuable space that could be used for a grannie flat or a greyhound pen (depending on your sense of priorities or whatever).

Neither have the hoarders been helped by recent massive wine discounts and the flooding of the market with quality wine. Penfolds surprised wine lovers by releasing large quantities of its famous Grange and last year another large Australian company held what more or less amounted to a garage sale of wines, some of which previously had apparently been too precious to sell under $50 a bottle.

That really gave everyone a jolt, I can tell you. I mean, why bother to put it away when the bastards are going to flog the stuff like soap powder? Next they'll be throwing in a free flight to Singapore with every dozen or at least a night for two at the Singapore Motel in Bourke.

People couldn't boast about making money due to shrewd investment foresight or point out that the fluid now being drunk by their guests was worth $70 a glass or whatever ridiculous figure they wanted to place on it. In other words, one's genial host could be made to feel like a bit of a dickhead.

It also proved that wine should never be bought in the same manner as one buys soyabean futures. Wine is for personal enjoyment and stocking a cellar should be for enjoyment and not for making money.

Perhaps because we have come to the wine appreciation business somewhat later than other nations, I still have the feeling — outside of The Great Cellar Scam — that we tend to take wine far too seriously. We are after all, a rather large wine-producing country. There are constant complaints Australia is in imminent danger of being engulfed in a lake of wine. There's so much of it about we needn't worry about it, and yet we carry on like the Poms, who don't make it at all and therefore regard it as something rare and valuable.

There are times when I wish we were more Italian in our attitudes to wine. It is something that is *there*. There are good and bad wines and one tends to be loyal to the wines of one's region and that is about all there is to it. I might add that in the international marketing sense, the Italians have become as bad as anyone else, but on their home ground they are not nearly so precious.

The type of wine you choose to drink is a very personal matter. It has to be that way in Australia simply because there's a bewildering number of companies and labels. Some years back now, when I was writing a wine listings book, I was desperately attempting to keep the entries of dry red and dry white wines down to a mere 300 of each. When that task proved impossible, the publishing company and I decided that it was simply no longer possible to produce a book of this type for popular consumption in Australia any more. And so, after a successful run of a number of years, the book was quietly abandoned.

In other words no one, but no one, can possibly hope to have tasted every wine available in this country; everyone's knowledge is limited in one degree or another. Thus the following recommendations about wines and their styles are of necessity both limited and subjective. If you reckon you've got a better winery down at the bottom of your garden, stick to it by all means and don't worry overmuch if you are the only person in Australia who seems to know about it.

But first a few points about storing wine once you've bought it. Personally I couldn't give a damn if you store the stuff in a disused dog kennel. I happen to use an old homestead icebox (three times the size of the old suburban things) which is insulated and keeps the wine stable and, because it weighs about a tonne, cannot be vibrated or jolted. Because these are the things that count: temperature should be low and stable (around 12°C for preference but 15°C is not too bad) and there should be the minimum of movement or vibration.

Now I know that in this country stability of temperature is fairly hard to achieve unless you are lucky enough to live in a world of permanent air-conditioning. So it really is a matter of buying an old chest of drawers or wardrobe and siting it in the coolest room or area of the house. I might add here that those walls of wine that some people insist on displaying in their dining or living rooms are for ostentatious dullards. They do nothing for the quality of the booze.

Of course if you do have an actual cellar, throw out the power tools and the skeletons of girlfriends past, put your booze in it and don't give the matter another thought.

A final note of warning. If you do plan to keep a quantity of wine — say, 12 dozen — for any length of time, do have a look at it, apart from reaching in and grabbing a bottle. Some corks do weep (leak), and if this happens, the seeping liquid can make a mess of things.

Now if you are going to lay good wine down it is best to have some everyday drinking material around so you are not tempted into breaking into the cellar every 10 seconds. This wine should be good enough so you don't say, "Oh shit, I can't stand this bloody washing wine any longer, let's just this once try a bottle of that good stuff we bought last week," and yet cheap enough not to cripple you.

I find that in the white division, cask and flagon wine suits the purpose (there's not really much harm in it) but I don't like cask reds. I don't know why, the bulk material is no worse than the stuff that finds its way into white casks but it does get to me.

So to avoid temptation I keep two blended reds in the house, of no great price but of good average quality. The two are Moyston claret from Seppelt and Jacob's Creek claret from Orlando. Jacob's Creek, a cabernet-shiraz-merlot blend, can be quite delicious and it has the sort of wanker-upmarket touch that I like in a lead cap (much jollier than plastic wrap, although it makes not one whit of difference to the taste of the wine). Moyston, a shiraz-cabernet blend, used to be one of those clarets that everyone drank in the days of fourpenny dark because it seemed to be the only dry red wine around.

It is somewhat out of fashion these days. Nevertheless it is a good, solid blended wine. And as both always seem to be wildly discounted I've never yet paid the full retail price for either.

I'm afraid cheapish bottled whites are a bit of a pig in a poke. I was once severely rapped over the knuckles by someone in power on this esteemed and intellectual magazine for being just too violently rude about them. However, in this regard, I note an American critic recently mentioned the word "kerosene" in connection with at least a few and the British *Spectator* magazine's cellarmaster, Auberon Waugh, after stating that Australian wine reaching Britain could be classed as Very Good, Good and Passable, added feelingly, "with one or two shockers from the rhine riesling grape which seem to be catering to a peculiar German-Australian taste for diesel oil".

On that note I will let the matter rest, apart from stating that Yalumba puts out 2 litre casks of high quality white at around $7, and that at under $6 a bottle, Seppelt's oak-matured chardonnay is a far better wine than its price would indicate (most bastards demanding $9 or thereabouts for anything that is fit to drink in this trendy class).

So there's two reds and two whites to enable you to enjoy yourselves and keep the cellar door closed at the same time.

Most Australian reds can hold up to 10 years from the time of vintage but there are exceptions. One of the problems in this guessing game of what to keep is the fact that there has been a radical change in style in red wines over the past few years. When bottled red wine was very much a minority drinker's market, those favored by the few were what is known as big, heavy and thick. If you drank them young they would very nearly kill you. They took at least five to seven years resting in the bottle to be drinkable.

But now that winemaking approach has changed. Most red wine on the market is aimed at being drunk on the day, so to speak. They will keep, but for how long is anyone's guess at the moment. Personally I would not keep most of the newer styles any longer than three years, but basically God alone knows.

One can put down a cellar over any price range, but there's a money-class thing tied

(continued on page 111)

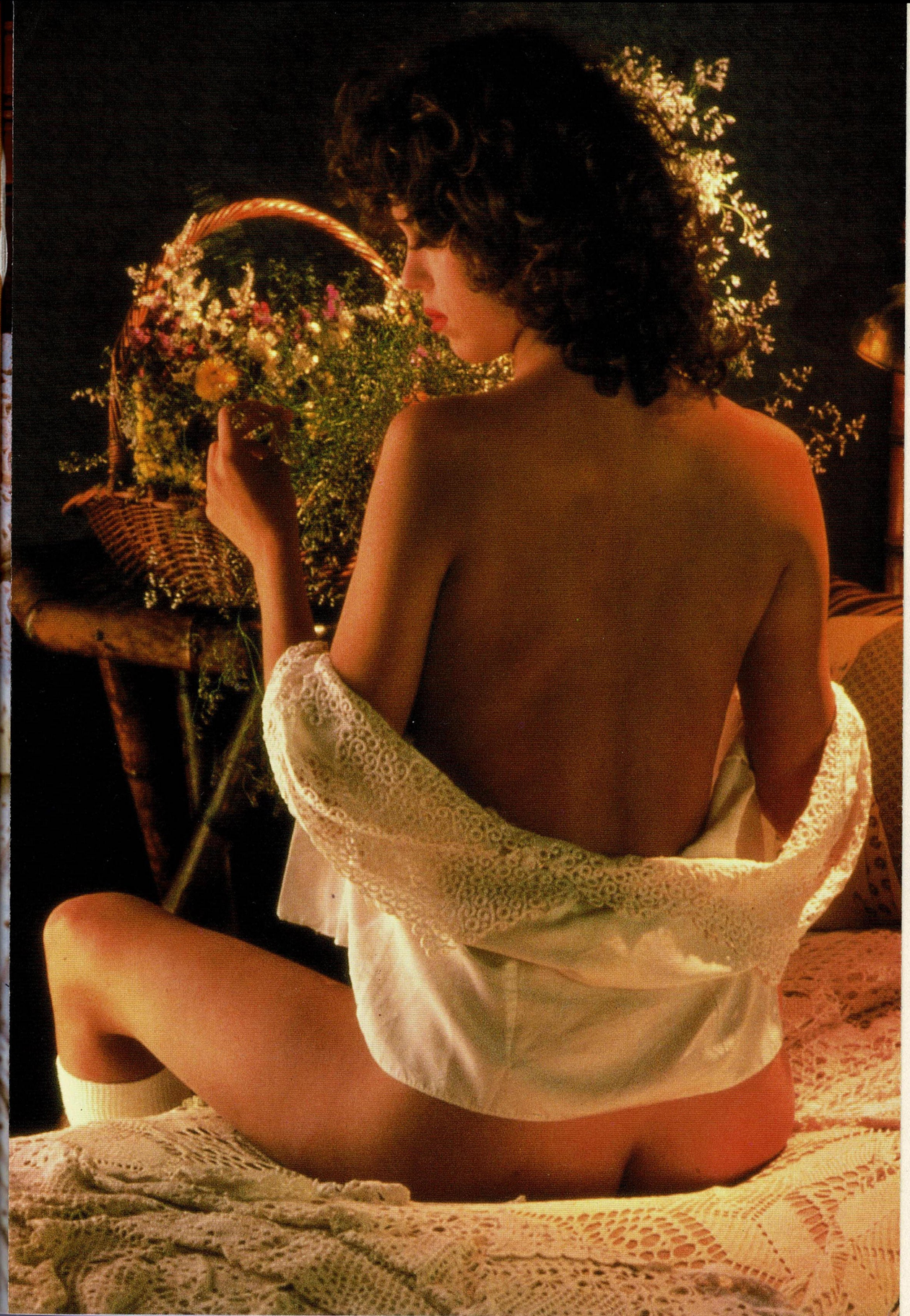
fine aarts

Chantal Aarts has the sort of perfect lines artists dream about.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY PETER HARROWER-HILL

School counsellor Chantal Aarts is considering a complete change in career direction. "After doing these photos for PLAYBOY I've decided I'd like to be a professional model," says the pretty 22-year-old. "I was amazed to be accepted as a Playmate. I've never thought of myself as beautiful and most of my friends consider me to be a bit of a tomboy. I don't think they believed me when I said I was going to be Miss April!" We have pretty persuasive proof here, Chantal. Photographer Peter Harrower-Hill found Chantal to be a natural in front of the camera. "I really enjoyed posing for the shots," she says. "I'm very proud of the results."

Chantal spends a lot of her spare time browsing in markets for old and antique things. "I love old-fashioned clothes and furniture," she explains. "And I like old-fashioned men, too. My ideal man has to have really good manners and must be quiet, sympathetic and gentle. I'd never be comfortable with a very handsome, arrogant guy. Most of my friends are men. I relate to males better than females. I hang around with a lot of guys on a purely platonic basis. We see movies, go to the markets, just have a good time. A lot of women can't handle those sorts of casual relationships but I'm in no hurry to settle down and I just like having caring men around me."



MISS APRIL

PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Chantal Aarts.

BUST: 95cm (37") WAIST: 61cm (24") HIPS: 93cm (36½")

HEIGHT: 177cm WEIGHT: 56kg

BIRTH DATE: 21·7·64 SIGN: Cancer.

AMBITIONS: To be a successful, international model.

TURN-ONS: Peace and quiet, camping out under the stars. Hunting out antiques from the markets.

TURN-OFFS: Crowded camping grounds, noisy people.

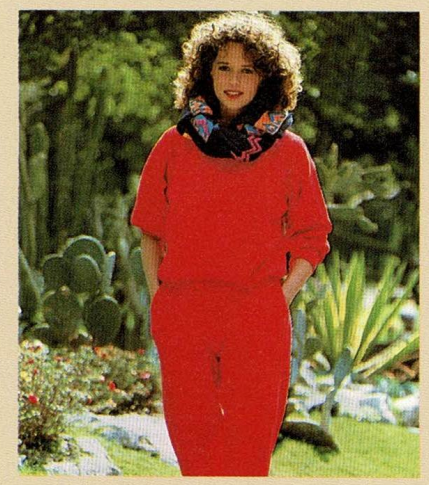
FAVORITE BOOKS: The Magus by John Fowles, any book by Clive James, Jane Eyre.

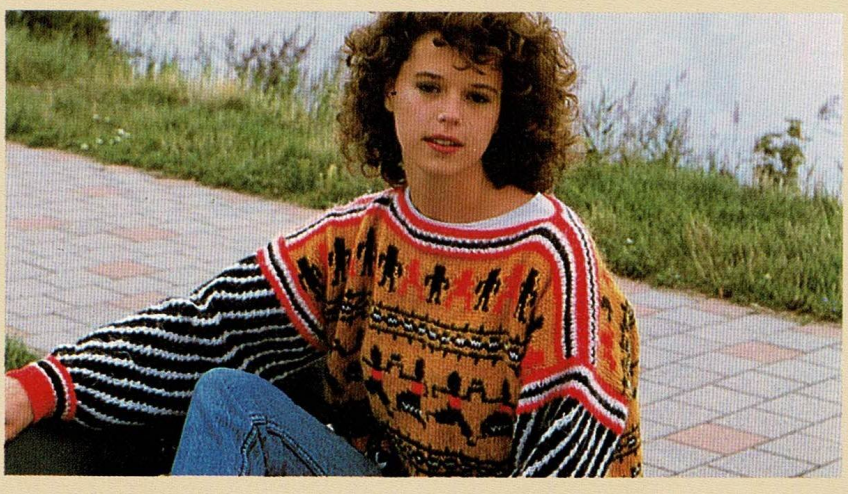
FAVORITE PERFORMERS: Meryl Streep, Bob Hoskins, Eurythmics.

FAVORITE SPORTS: Football (I'm a tomboy from way back).

IDEAL MAN: Great character, lots of energy and a good outlook on life.

SECRET FANTASY: To go back in time to when things were so much more romantic and exciting.





PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

On their wedding night, Dave went to get into bed with his new wife, Brenda.

"You can sleep in the other room," she told him.

"But we're married now," he protested.

Brenda had been brought up in a very poor household and she was relentless. "Any time you want to sleep with me it'll cost you $50."

Dave had no choice but to agree to her demands and that set the pattern for their married life.

On the eve of their 10th wedding anniversary, Brenda told her husband that she had a special present for him.

"Here are the deeds to the house," she said. "I've paid off all the mortgage."

"How could you have done that?" he asked.

"Well, it's been easy. Every time I charged you to make love to me, I put the money away so I could pay off the mortgage. Now the house is ours."

"Jesus, Brenda!" shouted Dave. "You should have told me sooner. If I'd known you were doing that I would've given you all my business!"

The soldier came home from a two-year posting overseas to find his wife with a new baby.

Furious, he was determined to track down the father.

"Was it my friend Alan?" he asked.

"No," his weeping wife replied.

"Was it my friend Steve?" he roared at her.

"No, of course not," she protested.

"I bet it was that bloody Brian!" he yelled.

"No!" she wept.

"Well, which one of my son-of-a-bitch friends *was* it?" he demanded.

"Don't you think I have any friends of my *own*?" she snapped.

A horny American visiting Amsterdam was down to his last few Dutch coins when he walked through the red-light district.

Stopping one of the girls, he asked: "Do you do American Express?"

"I'll do it as fast as you want," she replied.

Judy was distraught when her astronaut husband had a sudden attack of nerves and refused to go on a scheduled space mission. After all the preparation and the boasting to her neighbors and family, she didn't know how she could face anyone again if the mission was abandoned.

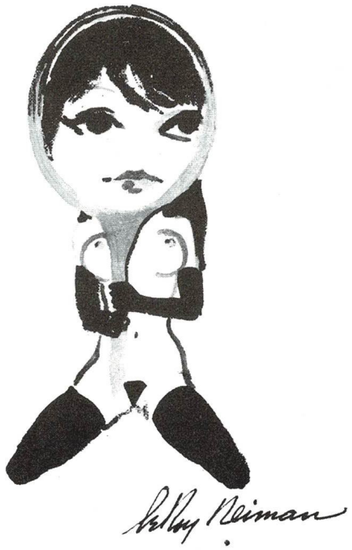
She decided to swap places with her husband, Dick. She put on the padded astronaut clothing, showed up at the base and no one questioned her. Off she went into outer space and no one was any the wiser until she was injured in a particularly bumpy landing. She lost consciousness and was taken to hospital.

She came to on the operating table and found a group of doctors frantically pushing and pulling her breasts. She panicked and called for her husband.

"Dick, Dick!" she cried. "Where's my Dick?"

"Don't worry about that," said one of the doctors. "We're still trying to push your balls back down!"

We've heard some talk in publishing circles that a new men's entertainment magazine will soon be released. It's designed exclusively for married men. It may look rather like the one you're holding now — except the centrefold will be the same every month!



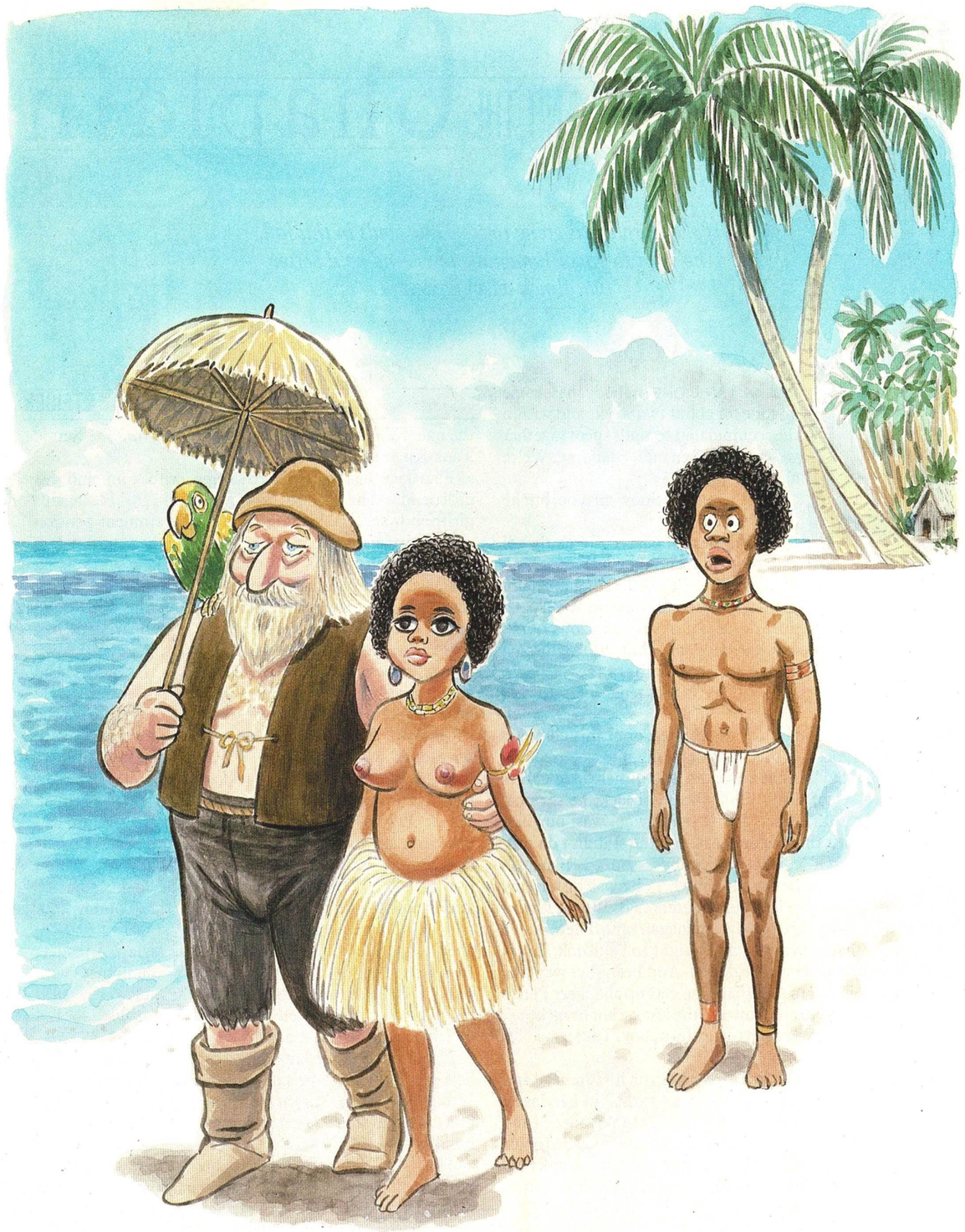
A flashy showgirl married a 97-year-old millionaire, largely in the belief that the old codger would never survive the wedding night.

While her new husband was in the bathroom, the woman slipped into a black see-through nightgown and struck her most seductive pose on the bed. When the old man finally emerged, she was startled to see that he was stark naked except for earplugs, a peg on his nose and a condom.

"Why are you wearing those?" she asked in amazement.

"Because if there's anything I just can't stand," he grumbled, "it's the sound of a woman screaming and the smell of burning rubber."

Heard a good one lately? Send it to Party Jokes Editor, Australian PLAYBOY, PO Box 746, Darlinghurst 2010. We'll pay $25 for each joke used.



"Since she arrived, you never say, 'Thank God it's Friday' anymore."

Herpes and the Chaplain

If the chaplain is going to save any souls in this jail, he's got to pass Flanagan's test. And he'd better not flinch when he does it.

Fiction by **LEW STEIGER**

HERE IN TANK ONE nobody has come or gone for about two weeks and within the accumulated seconds spent together we've reached an understanding. We're all innocent.

All of us except Snow, maybe, but he doesn't count.

It can't last, of course. Some they'll ship to prison, and they'll let others go or move them to different tanks and then new ones will come in. We'll get a queer or a nut or an obnoxious punk, and the mood will shift. But right now we've struck a balance. We've developed, you might say, a certain tenderness toward each other.

Flanagan, the oldest, is the ringleader of this common decency. It goes like this: the bars clang, the electric locks slam shut, they've spit someone else in here. He comes through a set of doors built like an airlock; he's a man entering a submarine. It's Peters, who was our last addition. What did you do? says Braxton. I didn't do shit, Peters says. Of course you didn't, son. . . Flanagan soothes, in a slow deliberate drawl. . . he was just asking you what the charge is. Drunk, Peters says. Which I had a right to be. Why sure you did, Flanagan says. There ain't a man alive that never once had a right to be drunk. Every one of us had a right to be drunk. And been that way too, naturally. Now come on. Flanagan gets up and takes Peters by the arm, steering him toward the last vacant bunk in cell D. You look like you need to lie down, boy. Take a load off your mind.

Peters is young, he's got a fresh gash on his forehead and a huge shiner, and his right arm is swathed in bandages. Coming into this tank he's a bomb ready to explode. . . and that's Flanagan for you. Flanagan keeps things calm for us. We like things quiet in here. If Peters was just a drunk he'd be in the drunk tank, Tank Five, not in Tank One. But so what? What's the difference? We're in this hole together, and while we are, nothing else matters. The point is to do good time, not hard time. Flanagan has been in longer than anybody, since July and here it is February, and his trial date isn't even set, but do you see Flanagan sweating it? No. He's as dry as dust.

Flanagan is a big pear-shaped guy with yellow skin from chain-smoking and a crewcut and false front teeth. He's about 55. They don't let us see the papers in here, but on the one TV channel we get they're calling him the Septic Tank Killer.

Flanagan had this retard living with him and his girlfriend. The retard was married to Flanagan's girlfriend, and the insurance plus a government pension were in her name. Flanagan drove over the retard with a rented backhoe while he was digging a new septic tank. Flanagan says he backed into the retard without seeing him. But, allegedly, blood, hair and bone chips were found on the front bucket of the backhoe, then underneath, in a pattern to suggest Flanagan knocked the retard down going frontwards, then drove back and forth over his head about three times. Flanagan says he was flustered. He never drove a backhoe before, he was trying to drive the backhoe off the retard. Flanagan says if he wanted to kill for money why wouldn't he have done it sooner? Why would he put up with all that bullshit for three straight years before committing the crime? Flanagan says he took the victim into his home because the worthless bastard had nowhere else to go. He was wrong in the head. He was dying of a brain tumor anyway and the only reason Flanagan's girlfriend married him was to become his guardian so the state couldn't come along and commit him. It was charity, pure and simple. While they salivate on TV about Flanagan's love triangle and the delay of justice, Flanagan will just sit there playing dominoes with Braxton. He'll have his teeth out on the table — the steel picnic table that's bolted into the concrete floor — and he'll just chuckle and shake his head.

Flanagan, a trapped man, is as cool as a cucumber. And he's got the rest of us talked into being the same way. Which is why, on this Saturday morning, we have a nice, quiet, decent tank with no hassles. And all of us are innocent.

That is, all of us except Snow. Snow is out there. Snow beat a man to death with his bare hands on a sidewalk in broad daylight and he won't say he's sorry about it. Snow can't get the difference between hard time and good time, either. He suffers constantly. Which is understandable. Give the kid time, Flanagan says.

Snow won't talk much. He's a real good-looking kid, but about all he does is lie on his bunk and stew. Either that or wash his hands and face. He's always jumping up to wash. He's a sharp kid, but very tight. . . he's not looking for trouble, but he's not somebody people would fuck with

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVE CALVER

just for the hell of it, either. Anyway, one day Snow makes an announcement. He gets his cup through the slot in the morning like always — every morning at wake-up they bring us the cups we're going to have for the day — just ordinary plastic coffee cups. They give them to us in the morning and take them away at night after dinner to be washed, and nobody thinks anything about it. But on this particular morning Snow ties a little piece of sheet on the handle of his cup and holds it up for everybody to look at.

"See this cup?" he says. "The cup with the tag on it is mine. Anybody touches my cup is going to be very sorry. You all got that? Don't touch my cup."

We think he's crazy, of course. We got our own cups, who would want to touch Snow's cup? We roll our eyes at each other. Snow's gone off his nut. He isn't the first.

Then a couple of days later, whammo, the blisters. For the first time, we see Snow's blisters.

It's something. Here's this great-looking kid. He has this fine white face, and nice dark hair, and big, innocent eyes. And around his mouth he has the grossest case of herpes anybody never saw. Not just one little cold sore, either. We're talking blisters here.

When half of us go to the cafeteria, Peters rummages through the magazine stack and digs up a dog-eared old *Time* magazine with a cover story on the subject. "Herpes, The New Scarlet Letter" is the title. Snow's back in the tank, so Peters reads us the gory details out loud: there's no cure, you get it for life; some people never have sex again; it's extremely painful; it comes and goes, but when you have it you can feel it coming; and it's people who sleep around that get it. Finally they say it's good, maybe it will usher in a new morality.

Braxton laughs at Peters' horror. "Look at you, Peters," Braxton leers. "What the fuck you want to worry about *that* shit for?" he says, slapping Peters on the back. "If I was you, man, I'd be thinking about AIDS. . ."

Peters takes the magazine back into the tank with him, anyway, and Flanagan confiscates it immediately. Flanagan pushes it out through the slot.

•

A day or two later Flanagan asks Snow to read his case. Snow reads the papers, then gives them back to Flanagan. "You shouldn't have said you backed into him," Snow says softly. "You should have just said you hit him going frontwards and it was an accident."

Flanagan shrugs. He takes back the papers. You can picture how it was for him. She marries the retard. He's going to die any day, any minute. It's barely a crime. It's just a neat piece of engineering. Social justice. Who else would get the money? The government? But then the retard won't die. He won't die and he won't die and he won't die. After three years of having him underfoot something tears loose inside Flanagan. He's outside trying to dig a septic tank and the retard's on the ground, in the way. The retard won't leave Flanagan alone, he's out there slobbering in the wind. Flanagan sits on the cold steel seat of the backhoe grinding his teeth, breathing exhaust, trying to get the job done. Then the retard stumbles in front of the backhoe. Afterwards, Flanagan panics. He tells the wrong story.

In jail, Flanagan rallies. He's surrendered all the dignity he's going to. No more. He's told them his story and that's the one he's going to stick with.

And in the cell, looking at Snow, he shrugs.

•

But now it's the second Saturday of the month, the day they have the rap session. At first none of the new ones are going to go, but then Flanagan says they have a coffee machine in there and you can drink all you want. Sometimes they even have doughnuts and the old chaplain is pretty easy, too. Pretty laid-back.

At the last minute, Flanagan gets Snow to come. Snow's had a paper towel spread out on his pillow. He's been lying on his bunk with his face to the wall since wake-up.

We go to a plain concrete room with TV cameras in two corners and metal chairs set in a circle. Sure enough, there's a coffee machine on a little card-table back in a corner, outside the circle. Just our luck, though, no doughnuts. The bastards in here before us have eaten them all. Right off, we make a beeline for that coffee, though.

It's a new chaplain, not the regular. This one is young and he's cool. He nods the guard away with a look that says he's got things under control. God's on his side. The guard locks us in as he goes, and the rap session begins. As we sit, Braxton rolls his eyes at the cameras to say watch out, the room could be bugged. It's true, too, there are little microphone slots in the camera housings under the lenses. In the centre of the jail is a control cage and wherever you go in the jail outside of a tank, somebody watches you.

The chaplain has a sip of coffee. "The first thing we have to decide," he says, "is whether we want to have smoking in this room or not. How many smokers do we have?" It's a democratic circle. The chaplain is sitting in a metal chair, just like ours, and he's a coffee drinker, too. He's assumed a position of no particular importance, except nobody will sit next to him, so he's got a couple of empty chairs on either side of him. There's seven or eight of us in the room and all of us raise our hands except Snow and the chaplain. "Well," the chaplain says, "obviously we're outnumbered." He indicates himself and Snow, "And obviously we'd rather you didn't smoke. But it's up to you."

The rest of us purse our lips at each other and smile. It's like this is some kind of test, where if we don't smoke it proves we could be good citizens, or it's a victory for the chaplain or something. This bird is pretty Mod-Squad. He's trim, he's got a nice haircut, with the hair still down over his ears to show he wasn't asleep back in the '60s and '70s. He's wearing a fancy turquoise ring and a nice sport shirt, faded jeans, jogging shoes. He's got this look that says, I've been there too, baby. There and back. I know what it's all about. *We can talk.*

The chaplain doesn't even blink when Flanagan lights up. We're all thinking about the camera, wondering how to play this one. Flanagan lights right up. The chaplain smiles. He takes another sip of coffee, then he leans to put his cup down on the floor in front of him. He stretches. He puts his hands behind his head and bends over the back of the chair, shuts his eyes tight as if to say it's already been a long day for him. He's had people in here before us, and he'll have more after we're gone. "You're Flanagan, aren't you?" he says. Flanagan nods. "Okay, Flanagan, you want to spread out some ashtrays?"

Flanagan gets the ashtrays. They aren't real ashtrays, they're little cereal boxes with the fronts torn out of them, tin foil left inside so the cardboard won't catch fire. Flanagan sits back down and scoots the ashtrays across the floor at strategic intervals. Nobody else can tell whether to light up or not. We look from Flanagan to the chaplain, and we're still waiting for some kind of sign.

"What it boils down to is this," the chaplain says. He sighs and shakes his head. "There isn't a man alive who wouldn't like to suck his own dick."

Everybody sits up except Flanagan. "There isn't a man in this room who wouldn't like to smoke his own bone," the chaplain says.

He stops to let the thought really sink in.

Flanagan leans back in his chair. Something's got his attention. He leans forward and rubs the whiskers on his jaw and frowns, staring. Then he smiles. Those of us who are smart enough start looking for what's made him smile. It takes whoever is going to get it a second or two to put it together, but by the time we do the chaplain is pretty much back to being just another chaplain.

"We'd all like to fellate ourselves, but we can't, can we?" the chaplain says. "We can't suck ourselves off because God didn't have that in mind for us."

It's great. It's a terrific opener because they never swear. It's so rare a preacher will ever say a dirty word. And it's true what he said. Anybody that claimed he never thought of it would be a liar. So if Flanagan hadn't noticed the chaplain's cup, then the chaplain would've pulled it off.

The thing about the cup is: there's a little piece of pink yarn tied to it.

We'd have all missed it. . . if Snow hadn't

(continued on page 104)

Fashion by Vitek

ALL INTO LEATHER

Once the preserve of rough and tough bikies, leather has been liberated to high fashion status.

On the left, he wears a mustard and purple cardigan-style jacket ($278) teamed with mustard leather pants ($596), both by Harry Who. On the right, his black leather jacket ($540) is by Trent Nathan. Her leather dress ($420) is by Kujo.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY TONY NOTTER

Opposite page: He wears a black leather jacket ($800) by Bizonte over grey leather pants ($400) by Kujo. Her black leather jacket ($950) and matching skirt ($250) are both by Kujo. This page: His black leather T-shirt ($200) and black leather jodhpurs ($375) are both by Kujo. She wears a black leather jacket with jungle print lapels ($700) and little black leather skirt ($200), also from the Kujo range.

This page: On the left, his black leather jacket ($560) is by Trent Nathan and black leather pants ($596) by Harry Who. On the right, his leather jacket ($480) is from Trent Nathan. Opposite page: On the left, he wears a grey leather jacket ($938) partnered by grey flannel pants ($158), both by Harry Who. On the right, his black leather trenchcoat ($800) is worn over black leather pants ($580), both by Jag. All garments available around Australia from leading menswear boutiques and department stores. Chairs courtesy of The Design Warehouse.

SUPER SAAB

On the surface it's a five-door family sedan. But don't be fooled by the SAAB 9000's mild-mannered disguise.

Motoring by ***ROB LUCK***

IT IS WEIRD. There is a distinct buzzing sound like a squadron of wasps or a fighter aircraft worrying some imaginary ground target. But nothing in sight. Nothing. Then way, way off in the distance, there is a small black speck right on the rim of the horizon at earth level. Now things start to happen quickly. The speck explodes like a three-dimensional image on a TV screen, and blasts straight toward the observers. There is a slight tremor on the ground like an impending earthquake, and the metal fence high up on the straight banked track begins to tinkle and ping as if electrified. In mere moments, the speck becomes a dazzling blur of sound and energy, suddenly splitting like an atom into

three parts as it explodes into the consciousness of the watchers.

There is a deafening crack as the trio of machines bombs past the vantage point, hurling a frenzy of air turbulence and noise down off the banking. Then they are gone, trailing long rooster tails of sound and vapor in the morning mist, steadily shrinking back into a diminishing speck again, until there is nothing. . . nothing, except that weird buzzing sound.

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TALLADEGA, Alabama, October 1986. Deep in the heart of tobaccy-chawing, nigger-bashing southern America, a trio of sophisticated Swedish machines is aiming for an unlikely goal — all of the world's endurance sedan car records in a single assault.

So just what do we have here? On the surface, it is a five-door family sedan-coupe in all its pristine mundanity. Sure it has needle-sharp aerodynamics, in fact the envelope of this five-seater has state-of-the-art coefficient of drag. But there are heaps of lean machines with Cd figures hovering around the low .30s, and you wouldn't think of committing any of them to a speed trial that involves averaging 200km/h non-stop for 100,000 kilometres. So what makes the SAAB 9000 so special?

The true and detailed answer is a complex equation of automotive engineering developments all packed into the one little streamlined box. But the simple truth is a sort of automotive sleight of hand — a small, compact, highly efficient device known as the turbocharger.

The turbocharger on the SAAB 9000 is about the size of your average hair-dryer and not all that dissimilar in appearance to one of those professional models that your friendly hairdresser uses to fry your scalp and ears. Like the hairdryer, it has a fan nestling in its gizzards, except the turbo has *two* fans, both on the same shaft or axle, and the blades are a bit more hi-tech (more like the turbine wheel in a jet engine, which is why it is called a turbocharger). One of these fanblades is turned by the hot gases rushing out the car's exhaust. This spins the other set of fanblades at incredibly high speeds, which is used to ram the fuel down the throat of the engine.

Since engines love fuel (even your last trip to the petrol station told you that), engines love to be force-fed by turbochargers. And that's great for performance. In case you hadn't been paying attention, it is this very device which has been responsible for reshaping the world's ultimate racing formula (Formula One) for the past several years. To give you some idea of the lethal effectiveness of this device (the turbocharger), consider that it can take an engine of just 1.5 litres (that's the current standard capacity for the average small car, which has, say, 60-80 horsepower) and persuade it to produce up to 1100 horsepower!

That is, as they say in the classics, the up side of the deal. The down side is that the turbocharger turns any engine into an automotive deep throat. If you keep the pedal to the metal you will need to tow a fuel tanker around to feed the thing. So the name of the engine game is to modulate the power delivery — that is, to find a compromise between performance and economy.

This is done with another sophisticated hi-tech device developed out of the computer industry and Formula One racing. It is a little black box of electronic tricks known as a fuel management system. When this is interposed between your right foot and the engine it can direct the turbocharger to deliver just exactly the right amount of fuel required to do the job.

The SAAB 9000 has got a turbocharger and it has got a little black engine management box. And it has a lot of other little tricks, too, which go to make a completely efficient automotive package. Some of them bear a cursory note: like fuel-injection and electronic ignition for the relatively small 2 litre engine. And front-wheel-drive engineering, which saves space and weight, and quite light overall package weight (1320kg), considering the size and carrying capacity (five adults and a jam-pack of luggage).

SAAB engineers looked at all these cute little specifications and they looked at the opposition and noticed that no one else had all these things in quite the same combination. So they rang up the Federation Internationale du Sport Automobile (FISA), a fairly surly group of individuals who control international automobile racing for fairly exorbitant fees, and said they wanted to make a speed trial.

Which brings us back to Talladega, Alabama, USA.

As a breakaway from the trad approach to these things, SAAB refused the race-prepared road to glory and insisted FISA officials take showroom-stock models at random for the test. FISA obliged, slapped the machines with the appropriate sealing appliques and they were shipped to the US.

It was all over bar the drink-shouting in just 24 hours. The team of SAABs had already taken the most important 13 records from the one-hour record (220km/h or 137mph) upwards. Machines had settled into a routine of 5000km each per day — equivalent to the average motorist's total annual distance covered — at an average speed of more than 213km/h *including* fuel stops every hour, using standard gas-station pumps (required in the rules) to slurp 60 litres aboard.

The Americans watched in awe as the swift Swedes attacked Talladega day and night for 20 days. The most unbelievable moment came when the skies opened on the third day. In Yankee racing, rain stops play, so the southerners were gape-mouthed when the Swedes pushed on through driving rain in dark of night. The average speed during that overnight session dropped a mere 3km/h!

Identical machines are now on sale in Australia — and at a surprisingly attractive price. In fact, SAAB has become the bullet performer on the local sales charts as well as the racetrack. The SAAB 9000 is the topline model in a comprehensive range that scrapes the bottom of the full-size sedan graph at around $23,000 and peaks with this machine at $53,000.

Apart from piling every conceivable option already known to the motor industry on board the SAAB 9000 and including it in the price, the local SAAB people came up with a couple of completely new ones. . .
— Compact disc-player (part of the total stereo package)
— Carphone (the latest, with hands-free operation)

Needless to say, everything is included from power-the-lot functions (windows, mirrors, doors, etc), air-conditioning, glass/electric sunroof/moonroof, heated electric seats and cruise-computers on the inside to alloy wheels and Pirelli P600 tyres.

When set on cruise-control (automatic speed-maintenance, regardless of terrain), the 9000 will deliver these figures. . .
— 9 litres/100km (34mpg) cruising at a steady 110km/h
— 8 litres/100km (38mpg) cruising at a steady 90km/h

It will accelerate from rest to the national speed limit in under 9 seconds, a figure good enough to keep it apace of the world's best and most expensive sports sedans. Yet on this market, it is up to tens of thousands of dollars cheaper, eg. . .

— Mercedes Benz 300SE	$95,000+
— BMW 735i Exec.	$100,000
— Jaguar Sovereign V12	$90,000

SAAB has turbo-powered models in its range starting from a low-mark of under $40,000 (the 4-door 900 Turbo) and will this year have a cabriolet version (full convertible) for around the $58,000 mark.

Around 300 cars to be introduced to Australia this year will be 98 percent automatic, a sensational four-speed transmission capable of extracting the best this machine has to offer.

The sad thing is, you will need divine guidance to deliver you from the law forces of this country if you try to extract all of this performance almost anywhere in Australia.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DOUGLAS KIRKLAND AND PATRICK LICHFIELD

THE COLBYS'

STEPHANIE BEACHAM

The Colbys **follows the exploits of Sable (Stephanie Beacham) and Jason (Charlton Heston) as they build an empire in TV soapdom.**

If you follow the prime-time soaps *Dynasty* and *The Colbys*, you'll know the rich have a fatal attraction for bitches. And *The Colbys'* Stephanie Beacham has the sort of icy beauty and withering stare that could even get Joan Collins worried. We uncovered these 1972 shots of Miss Beacham. Back then, Stephanie was living "as a happy hippie" doing theatre in London. She played lead roles for two of England's most important repertory companies, the Bristol Old Vic and the Oxford Playhouse. She played Mary, Queen of Scots in a BBC production of *The Queen's Traitor* and starred opposite Donald Pleasence in Harold Pinter's double bill *The Basement* and *Tea Party*.

Before Stephanie became Sable, the diamond-studded star of *The Colbys*, she also played in such offerings as *House Of Whipcord, Schizo* and *Horror Planet*. It's hard to imagine the child of the counterculture shown here as Sable, the diabolical, scheming wench. But in her early twenties, Stephanie lived in what she describes as "a sophisticated commune". She posed for artists and was not unused to the feel of fine furs and elegant living. Good training for her TV persona!

In these shots of the early '70s, photographer Douglas Kirkland chose to portray Stephanie as a brunette and asked her to pose in one of the "mod" wigs of the day. It was an important time in Stephanie's life — she had just landed a role opposite Marlon Brando in *The Nightcomers*. For his shots of Stephanie, Patrick Lichfield (that's Lord Lichfield to those of you who follow real-life dynasties) had her pose as an ethereal blonde. At that time Stephanie was quoted as saying, "Five more years for this face. . . maybe three. . . If I want to do film work, I'd better do it now." Someone who has been this attractive this long is likely to be stunning at any age, Stephanie.

If Marty recommended her, she had to be good.

Fiction by
CHET WILLIAMSON

Getting Enough

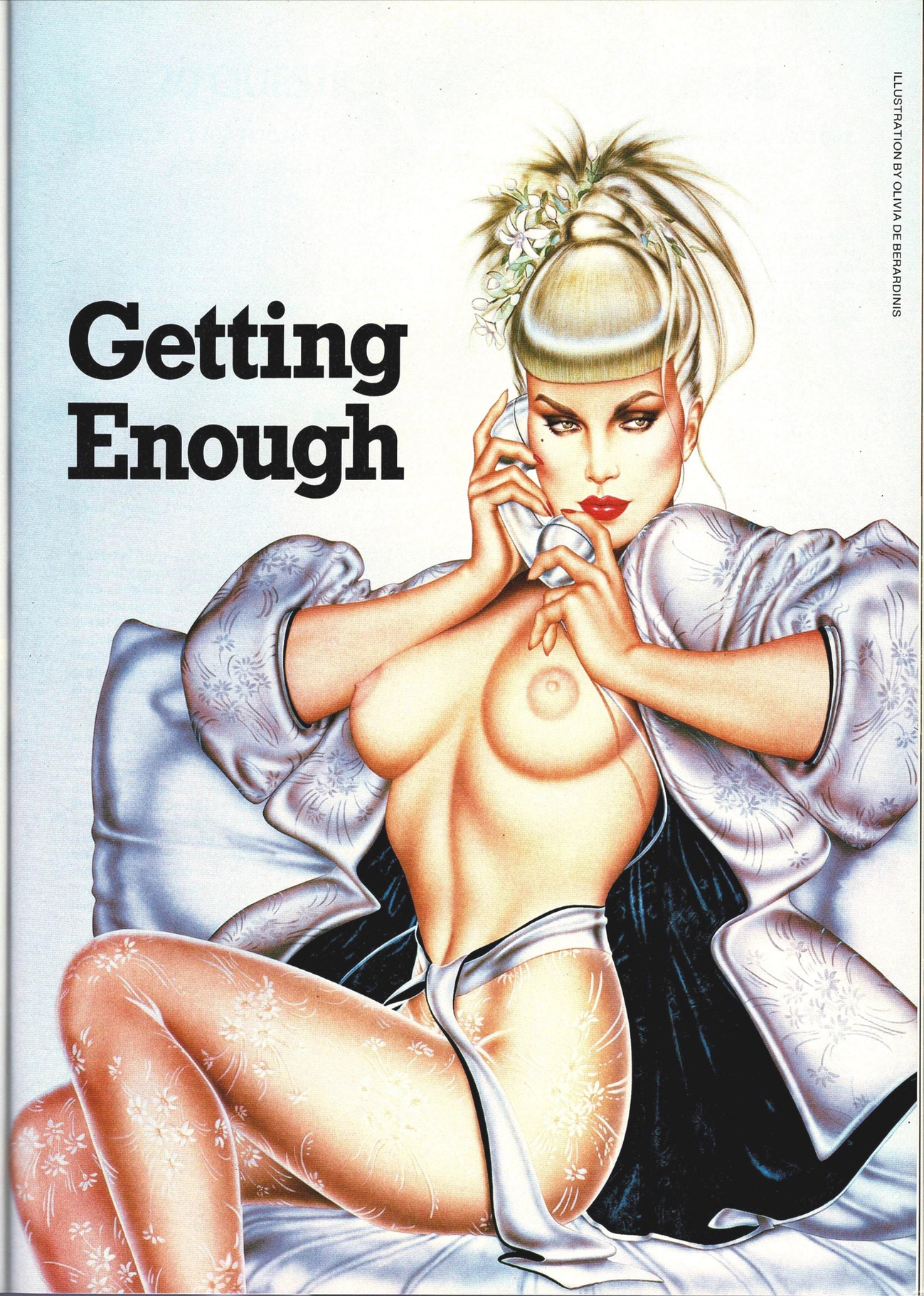


ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVIA DE BERARDINIS

I NEED LIFE, Marty. I need *life.*" Frank Ames looked over the rim of his third gin and tonic at his friend Marty Green. "Christ, I'm 40 and not getting any younger, I've been married to the same woman for 17 years; I got three kids... "

"I have somebody for you."

"Huh?"

"A girl. When are you going up to the city again?"

"Two weeks."

"Good." Marty pulled from his pocket the stubby pencil he'd used to score their match, smoothed out his cocktail napkin on the bar and scribbled on it. "Here." It read SHARON and a Sydney number.

"This on the level?"

"I kid you? She's the best I ever found. You want *life,* this is the lady."

Frank didn't wait two weeks to go to the city. Monday morning, he told his wife he had agency meetings both that afternoon and the following day. She drove him to the station, smiled and kissed him goodbye, not realising that along with his clothes, he had packed the unopened bottle of cologne his daughter had given him last Father's Day.

When Frank checked into his hotel, he brushed his teeth, then dialled the number.

"Hello, Sharon Allison speaking... "

The voice reminded Frank of black satin sheets.

"Uh, hello, Sharon. My name is Frank. Marty Green gave me your number."

"Oh, yes, he told me you'd be calling. He thought that maybe you and I could... do some business together."

God, this is easy, Frank thought.

"Would you like to come over here?" Her voice *dripped* with lust, with the promise of clandestine acts of indescribable whoopee.

He was about to ask for the address when, amid thoughts of silky flesh, came creeping other thoughts of hidden cameras, blackmail, divorce settlements, lawyers. "Well, maybe it would be better here. I'm expecting some calls."

"And when would be convenient?"

"Um... any time."

"Say in an hour?"

"Ah... sure."

"So tell me a little about yourself."

"Why?"

"Well, I have to know what you want."

Frank thought for a moment. "The usual, I guess."

"The usual?" She laughed, a clear, bell-like sound that made the base of Frank's spine sweat. "There are so many ways to go, Mr... "

"Ames." He bit his tongue. He'd been planning to tell her his name was Smith, but the truth had jumped out of his mouth faster than a bad oyster.

"Mr *Ames*... " He had always thought his name was short, but her voice made it delightfully polysyllabic. "And I *do* want to work up something very special for you, since you're a friend of Marty's. Now. How old are you?"

How *old* was he? Was she worried about his heart, or what? "Thirty-seven," he lied.

"Are you married?"

"Uh... " Why should I lie? Maybe there's a discount. "Yes."

"Children?"

Children? "Three. But... "

"You like to... travel?"

A leading question if ever there was one. "Oh yeah."

"Yes?"

What the hell; he'd said sillier things. "Around the world... you know?"

"Hmm," she mused breathily. "That could be a little extra."

"No problem."

"Now, how about any illnesses?"

Although it was an intrusive question, it made him feel relaxed. If she was so concerned, the chances of picking up anything from her would be very small. And Marty, as Frank knew, was a very cautious man. "Oh no, I'm clean."

"Oh!" She laughed again, and his toes curled. "It's so *good* to be clean. Just one more thing — do you smoke?"

"Smoke... what?"

"Cigarettes."

"No."

"Good. That'll make things much nicer. And less expensive, too."

Frank wondered if she were associated with the Australian Cancer Society or if she simply detested smoker's breath. Either way, he was glad he had quit.

"So," she went on, "I'll be there at six. Where are you?"

He gave her the name of his hotel and the room number.

"I assume you have everything we need?"

Another leading question. "Well, I... should hope so."

"Fine. Then you'll be all ready for me when I arrive."

He frowned. "You mean... be ready to start as soon as you get here?" He realised she was a professional, but there were, after all, conventions.

"Sure."

"Well, do you want anything to drink first?"

"Oh, no, I really don't like to drink on the job."

"Ah. I'll just be ready to go,then."

"Yes. Have everything out when I get there."

"Everything *out*?"

"Mmm-hmm. *You* know."

"Everything out."

"Right."

"Right."

"See you."

"Right."

There was a click, and she was gone. Frank sat thinking for a minute, then went into the bathroom, showered, shaved and splashed the Father's Day cologne into all his cracks and crevices. There was no telling what she might do, and if she was so concerned about smoker's breath, he wanted to make sure he didn't offend in any other way.

Cleansed and anointed, he stood before the full-length mirror in the bathroom door and looked at his pink and naked body. Not bad for 40. He thought the two miles a day on the exercise bike had helped. He brushed his teeth again, sat on the bed and waited.

At six o'clock, there was a knock on his door. He thought of getting up to open it, but romance and bravado overcame him, and he lay back on the bed, arranged himself to his best advantage and called, "Come in, Sharon!"

The door opened and she walked in, wearing a black dress that clung to her tall and slender body. Her face and form were so lovely that he didn't notice the briefcase in her hand until she slowly moved it in front of her like a shield.

He looked at her, she looked at him, neither saying a word. They remained like that for several moments, giving Frank plenty of time to wonder what bizarre devices she might have in her case.

At last he spoke.

"Well," he said, "aren't you going to say anything?"

She swallowed heavily, and he became suddenly and horribly aware that the red flush in her cheeks was not merely healthy color.

"I *was* going to ask," she whispered huskily, her voice trembling, "if you wanted term, whole life or endowment... "

Sharon left 10 minutes later. In her briefcase, along with the print-outs she had brought for Frank Ames, was a cheque for $900, the first of four quarterly payments he would send to her company every year for the next two decades to pay for his $250,000 Flexible-Premium Policy.

At least, he thought that evening on the train home, she had complimented him on his cologne.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AARON CHANG

20 QUESTIONS: PAM BURRIDGE

Australia's top female surfer makes waves about being a sex symbol, her bid for the world crown, and male attitudes to girls on boards.

Pam Burridge has been at the forefront of women's professional surfing for so long it's hard to believe she's only 21 years old. Six years of extensive travelling on the pro circuit have given Pam experience and maturity which belie her years.

Until recently, the financial rewards were not forthcoming but a lucrative contract with Sunbeam has changed all that. Sunbeam plans to use Pam's striking blonde looks and outdoor image as a vehicle to promote its products to the younger female market. Australian PLAYBOY *sent* ***John Elliss*** *to interview Pam after she had completed the first photo session for her new sponsor.*

1.

PLAYBOY: You won the Agree II Pro-wave, the first ever women-only professional surfing contest, late last year. What was its historical significance?

BURRIDGE: It was a landmark in women's surfing and it meant more to me winning that contest than any other. It's the start of getting more recognition and I'm sure it's given women's surfing a broader appeal.

2.

PLAYBOY: How did you feel about the pre-contest publicity from Daryl Eastlake and Nat Young? They said women's surfing didn't deserve its own big-money event.

BURRIDGE: That publicity proved to be very valuable because it exposed the attitude that was keeping women's surfing in the shadows. Eastlake said women's contests should be held with men's contests, as is tradition, but there was a problem because there were not enough events being run for women alongside the men's events. We had to go out on a limb and get our own contest to generate our own recognition.

3.

PLAYBOY: What about the comparisons made between the performance level of men and women surfers?

BURRIDGE: They're valid. The top men surfers are way better than we are, but then again you don't have to go very far down the line to where the women would hold their own. It's only because we don't have a history of surfing against the top level, but I can see it equalling out in the future. It's just a matter of strength. The way it is now, most of the women look to the top men as their inspiration; that's where we're aiming for. That's as it should be — that's the state of the art.

4.

PLAYBOY: Surfing is a strong bastion of male chauvinism. Did you have any problems when you were learning?

BURRIDGE: It wasn't hard for me because I started when I was eight and I resembled any tiny little grommet. The first outfit I had to wear was a pair of boardshorts and a striped singlet. I remember once a guy said, "Get your hair cut, mate," and I started crying. No one knew I was a girl for at least three years. By then I was too far down the track and I wasn't going to stop.

5.

PLAYBOY: How about when you were in your teens?

PHOTO: TONY NOLAN

BURRIDGE: I was pretty much a loner for a long time because I embraced surfing at such a young age and it's an individual sport: you go out and do it by yourself. That's what I liked about it. I could go out and surf and it'd make me feel good and I wouldn't have to deal with anyone else. The only time I ever had any problems was when I was about 16 or 17 and my friends were into doing other things and not going to the beach. The beach was uncool and I'd try and live this dual existence where I'd go out late at night and be anti-beach and then I'd surf during the day. But I'd try and make sure I didn't have a suntan. No wonder I had crises in my teens!

6.

PLAYBOY: Are guys wary of approaching you because you're Pam Burridge?

BURRIDGE: Some people won't talk to me because they'll feel like a groupie or something. They might be wary, but I am too. If people know of me before I know them I feel they've got the jump and I want to know them before I commit myself to anything. People tend to think they've got you worked out before they've ever met you and all they've ever done is read the paper. It's very difficult because you always put up a barrier.

7.

PLAYBOY: Are there male groupies in women's professional surfing?

BURRIDGE: Not to any great extent. I think it used to be more of a thing 10 years ago.

8.

PLAYBOY: In some respects you're a pioneer of women's surfing in Australia. Do you ever feel a responsibility for its development?

BURRIDGE: I've played a role in its development because I've been very vocal about what I think. But I don't take any credit because I only do it for my own fulfilment. I surf and it's my career. I'm not out there performing a charity and if I'm pioneering it's only because I'm selfish and want it to work for me.

9.

PLAYBOY: How important would a world title be to you?

BURRIDGE: It'd help me immensely. Financially it'd be priceless. Right now it doesn't affect me incredibly. I've been called the Clayton's world champion! I have the profile of a world champ but I haven't actually done it yet. I intend to, though. It's *the* one ambition in my life. It's incredibly important but it's not life and death.

10.

PLAYBOY: Is there a fear about what's beyond pro surfing?

PHOTOS: TONY NOLAN

BURRIDGE: Sure there is. That's a big fear with anybody who relies on something as transient as sport. It's only in you for a number of years and then it's gone but I'll deal with that when it happens.

11.

PLAYBOY: In the past you've surfed quite a bit against men and beaten some young male surfers with high profiles. How do you feel when you see a guy with his ego crushed?
BURRIDGE: I have to run away. I don't want to rub it in. It's amazing but there are guys who still get harassed about it years later. It shouldn't be that degrading being beaten by a woman but then again, that's surfing.

12.

PLAYBOY: How much travelling do you do every year?
BURRIDGE: I'm away about five or six months. I mostly enjoy it but not when I come home and try and fit into my lifestyle here. It's hard to say where your home is when you're away for half the year.

13.

PLAYBOY: You've been to Hawaii a number of times. How do you handle the fear factor?
BURRIDGE: When I first went I was totally fearless because I was so young. I had no comprehension of what could actually happen out there. I've surfed big Sunset Beach and Pipeline but I won't surf Waimea Bay because I'm not into blatant, macho, big-wave riding. It's an advantage being a girl — you don't *have* to go out when it's giant! I like Hawaii but as the years go by I'm getting more scared. It doesn't hold back my performance but I have a more realistic understanding of what can happen over there. You never overcome the fear — you just have to master its hold so you don't panic.

14.

PLAYBOY: How hard is it to maintain a real relationship with all that travelling?
BURRIDGE: It's basically impossible. I've tried it. You've got to work out your priorities — whether you want your career or just the traditional let's settle down, marriage, kids and all that. Unless you take your partner with you it's no good, and anyone who is content to travel around the world watching me isn't worth having as a partner. There couldn't be much to them. At the moment anything serious is out of the question but that suits me anyway.

15.

PLAYBOY: Have you used your looks to promote yourself?
BURRIDGE: Well, people always use their looks, but it depends on whether you sell them out completely to someone else to manipulate for their gain. It's all part of the package, using your looks, your personality, how you present yourself. How far you go is up to the individual. I could go out and create an image where I was totally off the wall, an outrageous, erotic person even though in reality I was a real goody girl — it's what you can live with. I have to keep to my natural personality as far as possible.

If I started straying off the track and tried to create and manipulate an image just for the media I'd become completely lost. I'd end up not knowing where the publicity stopped.

16.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever wish for a "normal" lifestyle?
BURRIDGE: I've tried it and it drives me crazy. I yearn for different experiences and travel. I'm not too crazy about discipline and a daily routine.

17.

PLAYBOY: Do you see yourself as a beachgirl stereotype?
BURRIDGE: Sure, I look like the walking cliche of a beachgirl. I've got blonde hair, even a pink surfboard, and in the middle of summer you might catch me with a tan. That's fantastic from a marketing point of view.

18.

PLAYBOY: You released a single a while ago. Why the foray into music?
BURRIDGE: That was just another dimension, another adventure. I have friends who are into music and it seemed like a good way to raise my public profile and get away from the stereotype.

19.

PLAYBOY: Do you ever feel guys are perving at you when you're out in the surf?
BURRIDGE: Yeah. Sometimes you resent it but then other times I like it. I'm like anyone else. Sometimes it's an ego boost when someone looks at you and other times you don't like it.

20.

PLAYBOY: Okay, so would you do an Australian PLAYBOY centrefold?
BURRIDGE: No!! Not because I'm a moral campaigner, but just because I wouldn't feel comfortable about it.

AUSSIE RULES *(continued from page 40)*

If Brisbane weren't faced with so many obstacles, I would tip Melbourne for the wooden spoon.

great disappointment to the legion of Footscray fans out in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne. Success has been rare — just one premiership back in 1954, and most recently the losing Preliminary Final in 1985, with not much in between. Unfortunately 1987 doesn't appear to offer much better than the even win/loss ratio (11/11) of last season, which netted the club 8th place.

The real loss has been that of general manager Shane O'Sullivan to the greater challenge and potentially greater rewards of the Brisbane Bears. O'Sullivan was credited with the off-field success of Footscray in the past few seasons, in the harmonious and determined spirit of the players, and in the cunning recruiting that brought many of them to "Dogland". O'Sullivan recruited the likes of weird back pocket and Brownlow medallist Brad Hardie and ruckman Andrew Purser from Western Australia, and didn't pay a lot of money.

Hardie, whether he plays for Footscray or not in 1987 (his fate is one that will probably not be decided until just before the bounce of the ball this season), is not the key to the success of the team. That's according to coach Michael Malthouse. Hardie is such a brilliant but eccentric player that he sometimes upsets the team plan — which in the case of Footscray is simple, and most effective, especially when playing at home, on the oddest shaped ground in the competition, the Western Oval (it's shaped like a shoe box with rounded corners).

The general idea is for full back and captain Rick Kennedy to run and kick the ball to wingman Doug Hawkins who baulks and weaves and kicks it to full forward Simon Beasley, who marks and kicks a goal. If Beasley misses the mark, or it's kicked over his head, then small men Brian Royal, or Angelo Petraglia, or Tony Liberatore, or Tony McGuiness will pounce and snap a major.

Nothing wrong with the plan, except that other teams tended to get the ball more often, move it quicker and more skilfully, and run rings around Footscray's slow defence — especially away from home. It's difficult to imagine this not happening again without any startling recruits. And Footscray don't have one of the easier draws. They play the top teams twice, and they seem destined to finish in the middle of the pack.

PREDICTION: Ninth, perhaps a rung higher.

GEELONG

Geelong were obviously the first team to enjoy the privilege of playing in the VFL and not live in Melbourne. This resulted in considerable success when the game was smaller and more provincial, but since the '60s, as progress has overtaken the VFL, Geelong have been unable to achieve anything more than an early-season threat.

It's got something to do with living in a smaller town, being a haven for boys who don't want to live in the big smoke. The prime example of this is Gary Ablett, perhaps the player with more built-in genius than anyone else in the competition. (His skill has nothing, or everything if you prefer, to do with being a born-again Christian, playing under coach John Devine!) Ablett couldn't hack it at Hawthorn, a friendly, family club, but thrives at Geelong where his uncanny marking and wayward kicking win and lose games for the Cats in front of an adoring crowd.

There's not much else there. Former coach Tom Hafey attracted Bolton, Toohey and the '86 co-Brownlow Greg Williams to Sydney in 1985, and their boots have not been filled. Captain Michael Turner has become a threatening goal kicker, "Scratcher" Neal and Neville Bruns are determined and reliable, but the rest are would-bes and could-bes. Perhaps forward Bill Brownless is the exception — he has genuine talent, and recovered from injury might make a big difference to the team kicking goals. Likewise John Mossop, once a top ruckman, will hopefully play a whole season free of injury, but it won't be for Geelong.

PREDICTION: No improvement. Twelfth.

HAWTHORN

What can you say about Hawthorn after the demolition of every other side during 1986, and especially after the destruction of Carlton in the Grand Final? The Hawks walloped Carlton in Yokohama, Japan, as well, in a post-season game. You can say that they did it as a team, a very tough team. Hawthorn coach Alan Jeans said of Carlton, "Kill the body and the head will die." Wow. And that's the general philosophy of the team.

Can they do it again? Well, for a club described by some as sanctimonious about their clean-living football family, the off-season was most unfortunate. Favorite son Peter Knights, in retirement but part of the "family", went to the Brisbane Bears as coach. Gary Buckenara went to court to leave for the West Coast Eagles. Terry Wallace wants a change of scene. Michael McCarthy went to Brisbane. Colin Robertson and "The General", Ian Paton, retired. Even club president Ron Cook, who wanted to retire, felt obliged to stick around for the sake of unity.

The wheels of success might be falling off. But of course there is a positive side. Match-winning players such as Dermott Brereton, co-Brownlow medallist Robert Dipier-domenico, rover John Platten, "Rocket" Eade and Peter Russo, Chris Langford and full forward Jason Dunstall are still around. Centre half back Chris Mew is still there. Ruckman Greg Dear improves with every game. It's still a formidable team, but one that I think can be beaten, and will lose seven or eight games this season, enough to drop out of the top two. The edge is off.

PREDICTION: Hawthorn will still finish third after the home and away games, but fourth after the finals.

MELBOURNE

There's not much to say about this club, except that perhaps they should have taken the opportunity last year to merge with Fitzroy. They are the most unsuccessful club in the VFL, not having played a Finals game since 1964. In the past 10 years they have been among the most profligate in spending huge amounts of money on champions, such as Kelvin Templeton and Peter Moore — and seeing no improvement on the ground. This malaise goes back to one of the first and most memorable high-priced flops, "Diamond Jim" Tilbrook in the '60s. Melbourne's most famous son Ron Barassi came back with a five-year plan, but failed in the face of the intransigent mediocrity of the team he had to work with. For a club which more than any other started the blessed game 129 years ago, this past 24 years has been a tragedy played as a farce.

Of course there are some good players. Robert Flower has been an ornament to the code in all the 254 games he has played. This is his last season and it doesn't look good for him. Peter Moore has won two Brownlow medals, Brian Wilson one, but sad to say, even their best form is not such that they will win matches for Melbourne.

There are promising players with heroic names, such as Cordner, and promising players gone — John Fidge to Brisbane this year, Greg Healy went to Sydney last year. And there are three new recruits — Warren Dean from Subiaco, Todd Viney from Sturt and Earl Spalding from Perth — but I don't think it will make a scrap of difference.

PREDICTION: If Brisbane weren't faced with so many obstacles I would tip Melbourne for the wooden spoon. Even so it will be a close run thing. Thirteenth.

NORTH MELBOURNE

North Melbourne have been one of the most attractive teams to watch since their renaissance under Ron Barassi and Allen Aylett in 1974. In the past couple of years they have continued that tradition, under the guidance of their very wise coach, John Kennedy, with some of the most exciting games and the most interesting players ever to

pull on a boot. They may have lost Ross Glendinning to Perth, but they still have the Krakouer brothers, who are so uncanny, many fans would travel to Perth to watch them.

A lot has been written about each Krakouer's anticipation of the other's position on the ground, as if it were something like the radar of a bat. It seems to me that it's more like having two players who have played with each other all their lives and who know without thinking the sort of thing the other will do in different situations. What I also like about them is their actual skills, getting the ball, getting out of trouble, getting the goal.

The Krakouers have good young players around them: the wingman with the famous North Melbourne name, David Dwyer, the elegant Mathew Larkin, Peter German, as well as experience in Wayne Schimmelbusch and Stephen McCann. And they never give up. That is the benefit that the coach has brought to the club.

Last year the Kangaroos won more than they lost, and finished outside the five on percentage (admittedly 20 per cent) but despite the Krakouers and youthful enthusiasm it's hard to imagine them doing much better this season.

PREDICTION: The competition for the fifth spot will be hot — prefer others. Seventh.

RICHMOND

Richmond's president is Alan Bond, and he's supposed to have spent, or be spending, $1.5 million on recruits and what is euphemistically called "marketing". Just what results the latter will bring on the scoreboard is a mystery to me, but the recruits are sorely needed. The once mighty Tigers have been a sad and sorry lot since their last flag in 1980. Last season they only beat Melbourne and St Kilda home, which isn't beating much.

There are players, or reputations, at Richmond. The giant ruckman Mark Lee, a hundred goal-a-year full forward Michael Roach, a splendid ball-getting rover, Dale Weightman and a couple of half forwards in Stephen James and Michael Pickering who have promised much. And of course, the enigmatic centreman Maurice Rioli, one of the most gifted players in recent memory. Whether all or any of these will see out the pre-season machinations down in Tigerland is a moot point. They play their cards very close to their chest down there, and professed unhappiness might not mean anything more than a bid for more pay.

But coach Tony Jewell (should he survive — they wield a sharp, fast axe as well) needs some more material to work with. That expensive recruit Phillip Walsh has gone to Brisbane, never having fulfilled his undoubted potential. There are holes all over the ground, but if the good players get an enthusiastic head of steam up, and some recruits join them, then they will do better than three other teams.

PREDICTION: Eleventh.

ST KILDA

St Kilda have been the worst team in the competition in recent years, winning themselves the wooden spoon for the past four seasons. My big tip for this year is that they will not achieve five in a row. New coach and legend Darrell Baldock must surely make some sort of difference, and despite losing Phil Narkle to the West Coast Eagles, the Saints have done some effective recruiting.

Carlton have let go experienced rovers Ken Sheldon and Alex Marcou, who have two or three seasons left in their legs, and will benefit from the work they'll get at St Kilda. They join last year's recruits from Carlton, Peter McConville, Wow Jones and Ricky Nixon, and a couple of South Australians, Stephen Sims and Darren Mansell. It begins to look like a team.

The Saints have good players already — Trevor Barker, full forward Tony Lockett, Greg Burns, Geoff Cunningham, Gary Odgers — and I think they'll do comparatively okay, as long as the good ones stay free of injury.

PREDICTION: A rise up the ladder to 10th.

SYDNEY SWANS

1986 was the biggest year so far for Sydney of the five since Australian football was first exported to that city. It was also the biggest year since 1945 for South Melbourne, the team which Sydney now only distantly resemble. In '87, only Mark Browning, Stephen Wright, Ian Roberts and Rod Carter of the regular players would remember anything about the fogs and frosts blowing in off the Lake Oval, South Melbourne, and the traumas associated with the removal to warmer northern parts. The old South, not to put too fine a point on it, were a team that were losing games, money and supporters. As Sydney, they are winning games, making a bit of money and gaining supporters in Sydney and, just as importantly, regaining them in Melbourne.

In 1987, unhappily, I see slightly less success in what will prove to be an extremely close-run season. Only two games will separate the positions from four to 10, and among the hard luck stories will be Sydney's missing out on the finals by a game.

Although Sydney retain the most important members of the '86 side — including the engine-in-the-centre Greg Williams, a near 100 goals-a-year full forward Warwick Capper, a brilliant ruck rover in Gerard Healy, that rock at full back Rod Carter, and splendidly attacking half backs in the forms of captain Dennis Carroll and Mark Browning, not to mention the astute, experienced and loyalty-inspiring coach Tom Hafey — there are doubts.

Like the ability of the team to go through the season with as little injury as they had last year. They need all their players fit, and playing close to their top. Ruckman John Ironmonger needs to play every game: there isn't a replacement for him. Capper must kick a ton, and kick those match-winning goals. Williams has to get 40 touches a game again. All this might happen. But then again it might not.

PREDICTION: Eighth, a game outside the five. But that old gut feeling might be wrong. The crystal ball wavers with the number four...

WEST COAST EAGLES

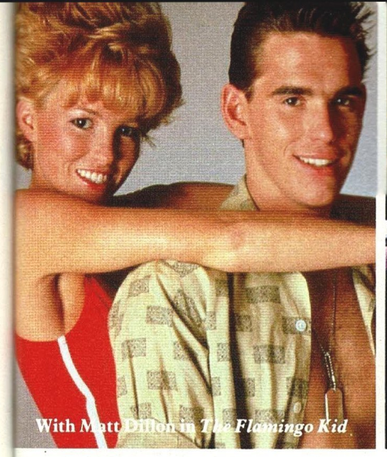
They keep saying they don't expect to achieve great things over in the West, but most of the Melbourne teams are scared to death of them. The Eagles have 12 home games, six on Sunday afternoons, one on a Monday holiday afternoon and five under lights on Friday nights. I mention this first because West Australian players grow an extra 10 centimetres, and put on five kilos playing at home. You would have to put any combination of players down as winning eight or nine of those, which means they only have to win another half-dozen of the away games to make the finals.

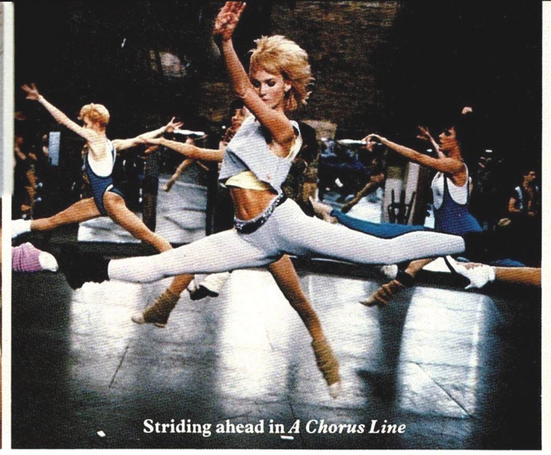
That's aside from any consideration of the players they have. These guys, coached by Ron Alexander who knows a thing or two about the VFL, and with former Essendon great and Brownlow medallist Graeme Moss in the front office, and another Brownlow, Ross Glendinning, actually on the field, the outfit looks to be a strong contender. Quite wisely the Eagles didn't go overboard trying to induce every former West Australian in the VFL back home — just a few. Former St Kilda rover Phil Narkle always plays better with a good team around him, and Hawthorn's Gary Buckenara is a dead-set genius on the half forward line, always provided there are no legal impediments.

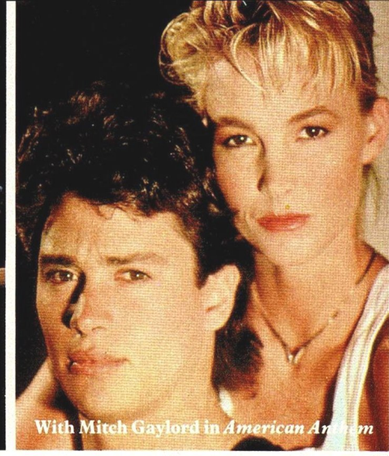
Among the home-grown players, names like Murray Wrenstead, Mark Zanotti, Geoff Miles, Andrew MacNish and Andrew Lockyer have all been high on the VFL scouts' lists and there is absolutely no reason why they shouldn't play up to the form guide. Not to mention any new young stars who might have ripened over the summer, and old VFL hands such as Robert Wiley and Steve Malaxos who do grow an extra leg in the west.

The only clouds on the western horizon are those of travel, fitness and week-after-week commitment. VFL teams are schooled in the long season, and the great toll it takes of players expected to perform at their best for six months if the team is to get anywhere in the finals. Besides fitness, and good luck with (or without) injuries, the mental side of things has to be experienced as much as learned. And we don't know what effect fortnightly travel all the way from Perth will have.

PREDICTION: Fifth. Better things in '88.


With Matt Dillon in *The Flamingo Kid*

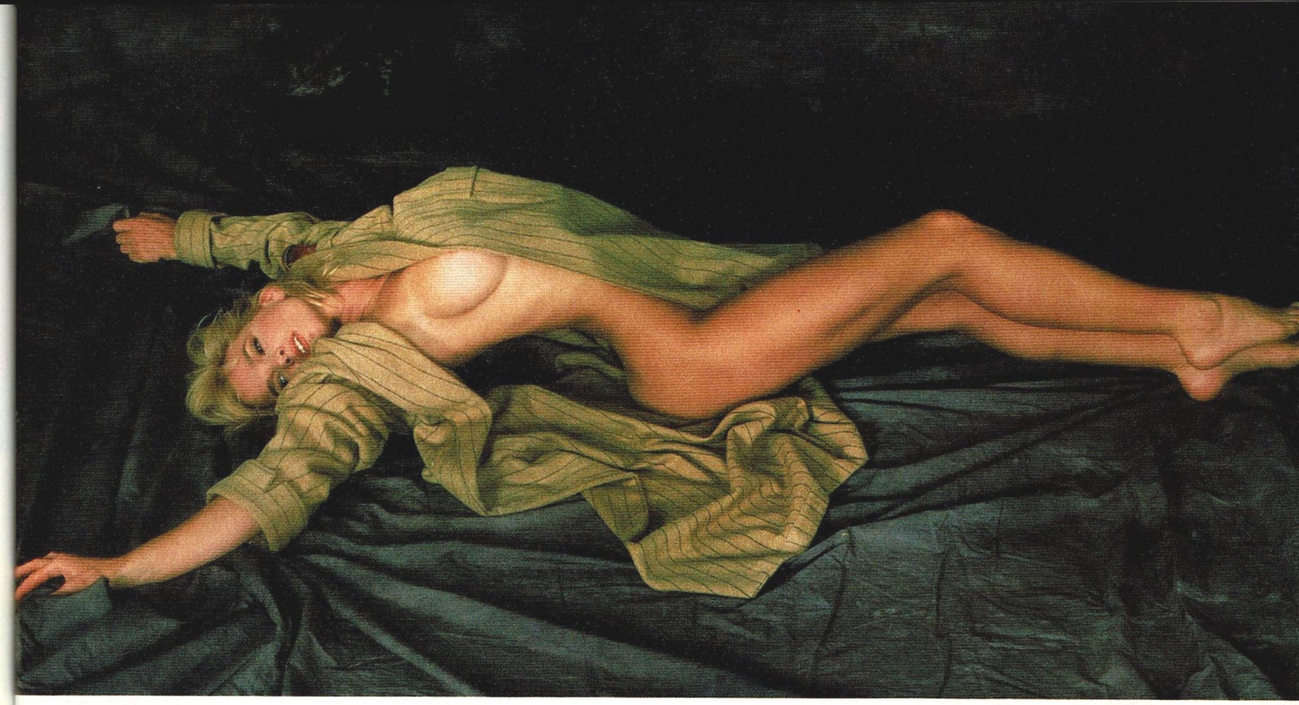

Striding ahead in *A Chorus Line*


With Mitch Gaylord in *American Anthem*

A SINGULAR SENSATION

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE WAYDA

A Chorus Line star Janet Jones gives us a peek at her very best form.



At rest or romping in menswear, rising star Janet Jones says, "The real *me* is movement." She also tells us she endorses the notion of "bringing out your sexuality without going too far". We say she's got it about right! An ex-ballerina with a simply marvellous body, Janet has posed for top fashion magazines, appeared on the cover of *Life* and has a string of movie roles to her credit. Now engaged to tennis star Vitas Gerulaitis, Janet is considering a couple of new film assignments while her famous fiance is planning to open a tennis camp. "People always loved him because he was so colorful on court," Janet says of Gerulaitis. "In private, he's fun and very giving — a great guy with a heart of gold." The jazzy Miss Jones also tells us she was a real tomboy when she was growing up. She was chiefly celebrated right through high school for her skill at softball. "The guys wouldn't start the game until I finished my dinner," says Janet. "And I guess I stopped looking like one of the boys at about 18."

Herpes and the Chaplain *(continued from page 76)*

We all sit there blinking. It's like Flanagan cast a spell on us, took us away for a second.

taken us through the same mental exercise earlier, none of us would have even noticed the chaplain and *his* cup, but now we're primed for it. First it's like — hey? What's the chaplain got? Then just by looking at him it changes. We can see it in the set of his mouth and the way his head sits on his neck and even in the manicure he's got — in the soft surgical cleanliness of his hands. It's. . . what's he afraid he might catch? There's vermin slouching in and out of here all day long, right? A man could catch something. But a guy who's that fastidious. . . well, how could he ever put it together on his own that all of us have thought about sucking our own cocks? It's like, he'd never come up with it on his own, so it's probably a borrowed line. It's got to be a borrowed fucking line.

"God didn't make us that way," the chaplain says, "so no matter how much we'd like to, we can't gratify ourselves in that fashion. But what we're here to talk about today is how and why we're all in this particular room together, and what we may be able to do about that. . .

"Come on," the chaplain says, "how about somebody starting us off? How about you?" he indicates Braxton.

Braxton's chewing gum a mile a minute, grinning. He lights a cigarette before he speaks. "I'm here because my ex-old lady says I got a little head off her 17-year-old daughter," he says. "Which is pure crap. I never touched that kid. Now that isn't to say I'm perfect or nothing. I done some wrong things in my life, for sure. But being in here this time has really made me think. I'm er. . . I'm on the verge of getting it together. I mean going to church on Sunday. . . all of that shit. Steady job, no more drinking, no more fooling around. This time I think I've, er, this time I've damn sure seen it, you know. . . the light." Braxton leans back and eyes the camera over the chaplain's head. He nods at it once for emphasis.

"So I'll see you tomorrow, then," the chaplain says. "At the service."

"Er," Braxton frowns. He sucks on his cigarette and cracks his gum faster. "That's right, Father. You, er, you sure will. Unless. . . unless I was to get real sick or something I'd damn sure be there, all right. The only thing. . . the only thing possibly could stop me is if I got real sick, then I might just lay in my bed. But if I ever did have to lay up sick I'd sure be praying right there. You can take that one with you to the bank, Father. I'd pray right there in my bunk and nothing could stop me. Wild horses couldn't keep me from praying in that bunk. No sir, Father. I'd just buckle down and make the best of it. Just go right on in spite of the sickness and pray my worthless heart out right there in that skinny old bunk."

"Okay, that's fine, that's real good," the chaplain says. "Now. . . how about you?" He looks at Peters.

"Me?" Peters touches himself on the chest. "Me?" he says again in a squeaky voice.

"You," the chaplain says.

"I, er. . ." Peters sits up. "I'm here because of my wife," he says. "It's all her fault."

The chaplain frowns. "Why do you say that?"

"The dog," Peters says.

"The dog?"

"Yeah. The dog."

"I don't understand," the chaplain says.

"It was the dog. That bitch. That cunt. If she wouldn't 'ave let the dog out, like I told her not to, then the dog wouldn't 'ave got run over. And if the dog wouldn't 'ave got hit, then I wouldn't 'ave had to get drunk. And I wouldn't 'ave gone driving the truck on the road like I did. I wouldn't 'ave hit the car and the little kids wouldn't be dead and I wouldn't be in here. And now that cunt won't even visit. I been in here two solid weeks and she hasn't even answered my phone calls."

"But here you are, aren't you?" the chaplain says.

"Yeah. Here I am."

"So what are you going to do about it?"

"Divorce her. I'm gonna divorce that bitch."

Everybody laughs except the chaplain and Snow. The chaplain leans forward. Snow puts his cup down between his legs, on the waxed concrete floor. He sits up and covers his mouth with his hand.

"Come on," the chaplain says to Peters, "think about it. It's not her fault you crashed that truck. It's not her fault the kids are dead. Is it?"

Peters looks exasperated. "I already told you. She let the dog out."

The chaplain shakes his head. "Check your heart, man. Think about it. Letting the dog out is not what killed those kids."

"The hell it isn't," Peters says.

"The hell it is," the chaplain says.

Peters frowns down at the floor. He's crumpling. "I told her not to let him out," he says. "If I told her once, I told her a thousand times. Now what the hell else could I do? Huh?"

"You could kneel down now and ask God about it," the chaplain says.

"Huh?"

"You could ask God for forgiveness."

Peters looks around the circle. "Now?" he whispers. "In front of everybody?"

The chaplain leans forward, he's so close to notching up Peters' soul, he can taste it.

"I had a dog once," Flanagan says, abruptly. "He was a razorback. Good nose on him. I was out driving this ridge once. Seen tracks crossing the road," Flanagan leans forward. "Put the dogs on them," he whispers. "Off they go. Slow at first. Then they start baying. I know they're on to something. Razorback is leading them, see. I can hear him. I hear him just steam-rolling through that bush. I'm following them on foot, running fast as I can. There goes razorback, roooo, roooo, roooo," Flanagan throws back his head to imitate the howling. He sits up.

"All of a sudden it's quiet," he says. He snaps his fingers. "Right now it's quiet. Too quiet. I think Uh-oh, trouble. Sometimes nothing is the worst sound you can hear, you know? Sure enough, I find him in a gully. Belly's split. Guts hanging out. He's just laying there real quiet and still. I take my T-shirt off. Brand new white T-shirt, I take it off and wrap it around his belly. I get some water from the creek, I splash his guts a little to clean them. Push 'em back inside. Tie my T-shirt around that belly. Carry him to the truck real easy. Slow. Sonofabitch weighed 35, 40 kilos, too. Long way to the truck. I took him home, laid him down in the garage. Gave him a shot of penicillin, put some of that blue goop on the gash. Wrapped him up. Boy. . ." Flanagan shakes his head, chuckling, "you should have seen him whimper when he saw that needle. He knew he was going to get a shot, see. He knew what that needle meant."

Flanagan shuts his eyes. "Well. . ." he says, finally, " do you know that dog lived? Laid there three, four days without moving a muscle, then just got up and went on. And that was the quickest dog I ever saw to catch a rabbit."

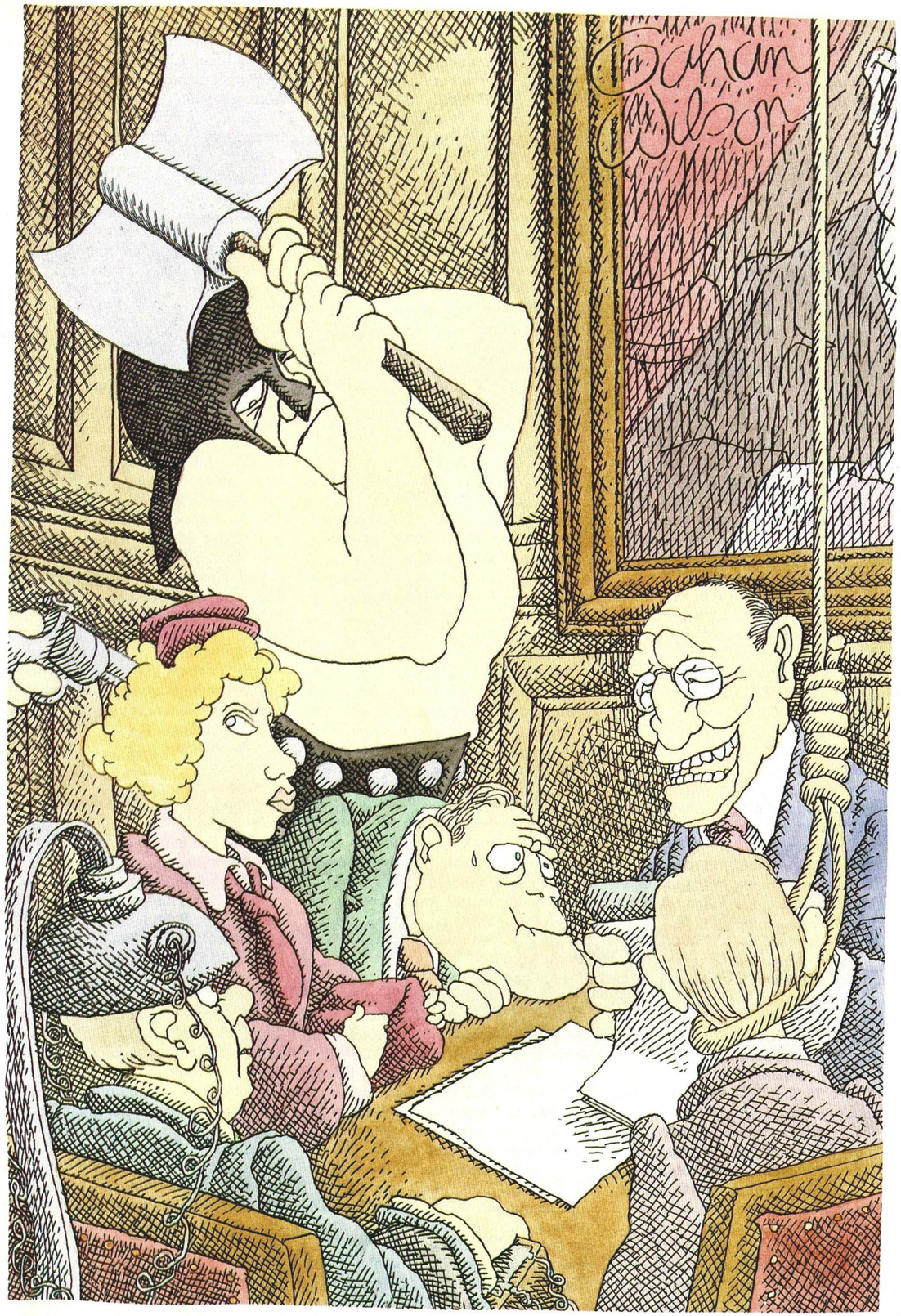
Flanagan snaps his fingers. "He'd be on a rabbit like that. Never would kill him, though. He'd just stop 'em and sniff him, then let him go. . ."

Flanagan shakes his head. "Never could get him to kill a rabbit. Used to make me sooo mad. Furious. Finally I gave him to my brother. Brother said he could make that dog kill rabbits. Knew for a fact he could. Well, he thought he could, but he never did. He shot him instead. Got so mad at that dog for not killing rabbits, he shot him. Oh, he never told me that, of course. Told me the dog just disappeared one day. But I know damn well he shot him."

We all sit there blinking. It's like Flanagan cast a spell on us, took us away for a second.

The chaplain frowns. "What does that have to do with what we were rapping about?" he says.

"Well. . ." Flanagan rubs his eye. "It reminded me of that dog."



"Before we begin I'd like to say that in 30 years as a solicitor I've never encountered a more interesting departure from the standard will and testament."

The chaplain turns to Peters and considers him. It doesn't quite seem like Peters is ready to pray anymore. "Look, see me after this hour is up, okay? Will you do that?" the chaplain says to Peters.

Peters looks around the circle. Finally he nods at the chaplain.

"Good." The chaplain claps his hands together and beams at the rest of us.

Snow laughs.

"What's so funny?" the chaplain says. "What are you laughing at?"

"Me? I'm laughing at your notion of God," Snow says.

"What do you mean?" the chaplain says.

"You think God looks like us, don't you?" Snow says. "You think God looks just like a man and heaven is a town up in the sky."

"It's written in The Book. He made us in His image," the chaplain says, irritated.

"Well, if He did. . . " Snow says. "If God does look like a man and if God just sat down and made all of this up off the top of His head, then God is an arsehole."

The chaplain blinks. Snow drops his hand away from his mouth. The chaplain looks at the floor. "I don't quite follow you," the chaplain says.

"How could you?" Snow says.

"Try it on me," the chaplain says, recovering, leaning forward again. "I'm willing to try."

"Ha." Snow glances around the room. Nobody can look him in the eye except the chaplain.

"Come on, man," the chaplain says. "You've got nowhere to go but up."

Snow shrugs.

"You keep it inside, it'll kill you for sure," the chaplain says. "A thousand times over. For eternity. It's the opposition for you. That's exactly what the opposition wants."

"Oh, Jeeesus." Snow groans and shakes his head. The opposition. As though life was a football game.

"Hell, son, go ahead," Flanagan says. He's leaning back in his chair, legs crossed and arms folded, head laying sleepily to one side, smoking a fresh cigarette, rubbing his whiskers with the hand holding the cigarette. "Man might have a point."

Snow looks at Flanagan.

"Ahem, A-he-he-he-EM!" Braxton clears his throat. He jerks a shoulder toward the camera.

"Fuck that camera," Flanagan says. "There ain't nobody on the other end of that thing but Sergeant Hoberman anyway, and if he ain't reading the sports, he's probably got his eye over on Six."

"What's Six?" Peters says.

"The Women's." Flanagan blows a smoke ring. "You go ahead, son," he says to Snow. "Spit it out. Probably do you good."

Snow looks around the room again. Then he turns to the chaplain. He has to work at getting the words started, but when they finally come, they come in a rush. "She was beautiful," Snow says, shaking his head. "She was as nice a woman to look at as I've ever seen. She was a brilliant actress. She was really, really good. Me too, I'm an actor, I mean. Not great but I worked at it. But she was something else. Exceptional. She was very sensitive and she had. . . like a lightning rod for feelings. And I loved her. For her acting first. . . then later just because. Just because in the beginning I didn't know any better and once you give yourself over to that, well, it stays.

"So we were living together. We tried out for leads in the same play. A local thing. Short run. But she got hers and I didn't get mine. I got aced out by Higgins. Just in from the coast, right? Just made a low-budget movie. They know his name.

"So she's out for rehearsals and I'm sitting at home, broke, looking at myself in the mirror. And Higgins, everybody knows his name.

"She was fragile in bed. I had to handle her with so much care. . . so gently. She. . . she could never come in the usual way. I don't know why. I don't know what it was. But. . . if I wanted to lift her up there, I always had to go down on her. I had to give myself over to it completely. I had to play her softly, with absolute concentration, or I couldn't take her away.

"Okay, I loved her, right? It was what I could give her.

"So. . . Higgins. I can tell something's happening there, right? You can always tell, if you're paying attention. But what am I supposed to do? Rant and rave? It's not my style.

"We never talked about it. One night we're in bed together and I can tell something's bothering her and I decide the best I can do is take her away. She stops me. She says no, don't. Don't do that. And I miss it completely. I tell her not to worry. I tell her it's all right. It doesn't matter. It simply doesn't matter. And she believes me. She gives in, she lets me. And I do it. I take her away and that's the last time. The next day she's gone. . ."

Snow starts to cry. "She was too weak," he says. "All she needed was the strength to tell me and it wouldn't have mattered. If she'd just stopped me. I wouldn't have cared. Even afterwards. . . all she had to have was the strength to face it. But no. She's gone. Packed a bag and went.

"I kept thinking it was me. For a week I worried about her. Then I get these. . . these twinges all around my face. Then, a couple of days later, this." Snow indicates the lesions. "Then I don't care whether I find her or not. I put it together. The twinges. She knew something was wrong, but she was too weak to face it. She didn't want to tell me she'd been screwing Higgins. Then the next day she gets her first outbreak and realises what it is. She knows she'll probably have given it to me, too. She can't handle it, and she splits.

"Ten days she's gone and then she calls. She isn't brave enough to walk through the door. Listen, she says. Listen hell, I say. You've got it, then. . . you have it, she says. I gave it to you.

"Me, I can't make myself speak. I'm trying to say something and I can't.

"Where? she says. Where is it?

"I close my eyes. I still can't talk.

"I'm coming over, she says.

"No, I say. Don't come. Wait till it goes.

"Oh, my God, she says.

"And she hangs up the phone. Now me. . . you've got to understand. . . I'm trying to grasp it. How can I work? How can I ever love anyone again? They say it's only contagious just prior to and during an outbreak. But they're not sure. They waffle. No one will say when it's guaranteed you're safe. So if she could give it to me unknowingly, then why couldn't I give it back to her, or to anyone else, without even knowing it? I don't even have to fuck anybody. All I have to do is kiss them. Drink out of the wrong glass at the wrong time. Most people, it's no big deal, right? They have a few outbreaks, or just one, or none at all. But me, I get this. The outbreaks keep coming, one after another. And no one can tell me why. Why is it me? You know what they say? I take it too seriously. I worry about it too much. Shit. If I didn't have it, I wouldn't worry about it, would I? You have to understand, it's my life. It's my work. How could I ask for a part, knowing that at any time it could nail me again. They'd have to stop shooting. If it was a play, I'd have to cancel out. So what could be worse? You tell me. How could it get worse?"

Snow looks around the room. We shift uncomfortably in our chairs. Nobody can say a word.

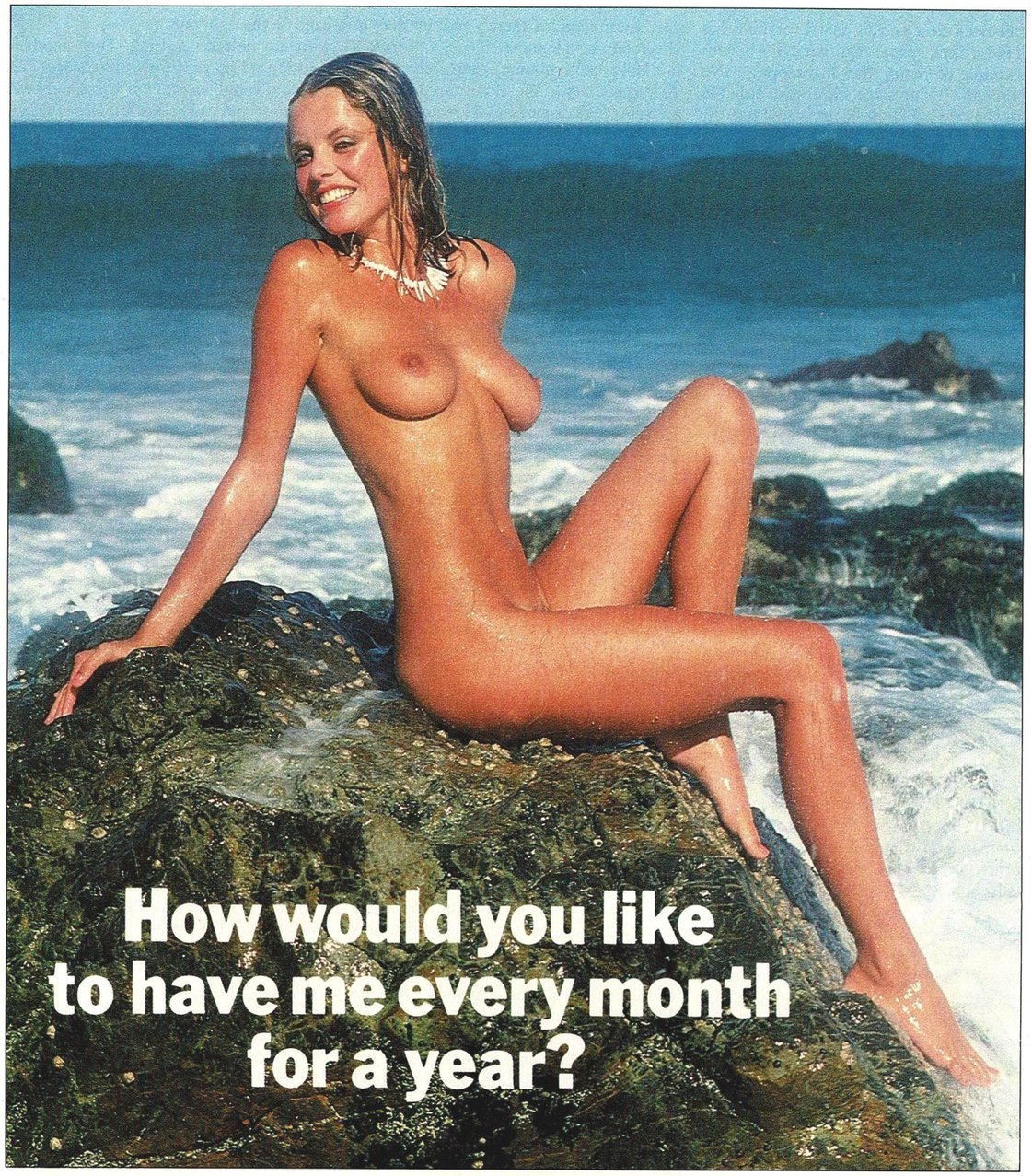
"They fish her out of the river," Snow says. "That's how.

"*They fish her out of the fucking river!*"

Snow boots his coffee cup across the circle. Coffee spills all over the floor. The cup clatters to a stop two chairs over from the chaplain. Snow's voice fills the silence, but now it's just a whisper.

"She ran her fucking MG off the fucking bridge," Snow says. "An accident? You tell me. Explain that one." His face twists. He nods to himself as he runs the last of it down. "So we do the funeral. We have the funeral and my first outbreak has passed, and then the second, and then the third. Months go by. I'm sitting at home drinking, watching TV. Going to the movies. I don't see anybody. There's nobody I want to see. I go out when it's okay, I see someone, I keep thinking of the next time it won't be okay. Sooner or later it's going to nail me again.

"Then I see Higgins. I meet him on the street, outside the theatre. I ask him. How long has he had herpes? How much of a problem is it for him? He takes it in. I can see him adding it up. Standing there watching me, adding it up. Then he has the



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gall to tell me it's no big deal. Everybody has it these days, he says. You get it, it's bad for a couple of years, then it disappears. No problem. It's no sweat. And just from the way he says it I know he never told her. He never said a word to her about it. Not one fucking word. He had herpes and he knew it and he gave it to her just so he could fuck her. No sweat, he says. He knows he gave it to her and to me. And he knows I know, and he tells me no sweat. So I drop that cocksucker right there and I beat his fucking brains out on the kerb. And I'll tell you something. . . if I had it to do over again, I would do exactly the same thing. And if there is a God, and He's up there watching this, and He looks just like you and me, and everything that happens is something He made up for a test. . . if that really is what it's all about and He actually can control it all but just won't. . . if He's so weird that He has to let it all happen so we can prove to Him how much we love Him in spite of it, and then He's going to make it up to us. . . if we'll just say we're sorry every day, and tell Him we love him, then when we die He'll scoot us on up there to heaven. . . if that's how it works. . . then He can kiss my arse."

Snow breaks off and sits there quivering.

The chaplain shudders. He jumps up. "No, man. No, no, no. Don't you see? You've got it all wrong. All of you. Can't you see it? You. Your herpes *is* nothing. What's herpes? There are a thousand diseases you could have that are worse than herpes. All of you. All your afflictions. . . all the afflictions on earth are nothing compared to what's in store if you don't come to God. Don't you see? God is your only hope. It's been written! The Bible, man, that's where it is. What else would we have if not for our God, for our faith? But God has left it to us to choose. We have to take the first step. We have to give ourselves to God. And if you don't. . . all of you," the chaplain slams a fist into his open palm with each phrase, "if each and every one of you won't take that first step, then you're doomed. You're lost."

"Shit," Snow says. "What can God do for me now? Get me probation?"

The chaplain can't believe it. "Don't you see it?" he cries. "Look at you!" He turns around the room, "Look at yourselves. Where are you? Where have you come without Him? You're on the brink, and still you're blind. You'll never know what God can do for you until you open your hearts to Him. A man's faith. . . a man's faith can move mountains. Herpes. Ha! Jesus was crucified on the cross for that herpes of yours, friend; for those children of *yours*, Peters; for *your* perversity, Braxton; for the weight of *your* conscience, Flanagan. . . Jesus did it long ago. And all you need to gain His forgiveness is the guts! All you need is the balls to get down on your knees in this room, with me, right now, and ask Him for it! I'll show you! I'll go to my knees this minute, and if there's another *man* in this room, he'll join me. . ."

"Hold on a minute, there, chaplain." Flanagan's up. "We don't need all this shouting," Flanagan says. He squints at the chaplain. "If He's there, He'll hear us all right. We ain't gonna need to be jumping up and down, shouting and carrying on, for Him to hear us. There's enough fuss in this world as it is. If we're all gonna have to get down on our knees, we might as well do it in a calm and sober fashion."

Flanagan sighs. "Now let's just sit here a minute and have a real quiet cup of coffee to settle our nerves before we go any further. Here, I'll buy this round." Flanagan stoops to get the chaplain's cup. "And. . . uuuuhh! oof! Snow, I'll get you one too."

Flanagan drags Snow's cup out from under the chair. There he stands in the centre of the circle in the puddle of spilled coffee in his shower slippers. "The rest of you want to just sit still and shut your traps for a while," Flanagan says. "If we're gonna let this chaplain lead us down on to our knees, we ought to do it like men. We ought not to do it. . ." Flanagan's left the circle. He's talking over his shoulder, real slow and easy. ". . . we ought not to do it like a bunch of hysterical schoolkids. If a man's going to set out to talk to God, then he might as well try and do it with a clear head. . ."

Flanagan is back, standing before the chaplain, ". . . and there's nothing. . . there just ain't nothing in the world like a nice hot cup of coffee to clear a man's head for him. Here you go, Father. Now you just wrap your hands around a cup of this coffee and sit yourself down and lead us in a moment of silence, for starters."

Flanagan is staring at the chaplain and the chaplain is staring at the cups. Flanagan holds both cups out to the chaplain, asking him to pick which one he wants. And the chaplain stares at those cups like they're a couple of 8x10 snuff photos. Because Flanagan's taken the torn piece of sheet off Snow's, he's taken the little piece of pink yarn off the chaplain's and now they're just two yellow cups. Looking at the chaplain you can see the wheels spinning.

What he'd like to say is: no, no thank you. I don't want any coffee. But then Flanagan will say: Why sure you do, chaplain. Why a man like you has just got to have so much faith that he'll damn near leap out of his breeches at a chance to demonstrate the strength of that faith. Why, the possibility of getting herpes. . . that little trifle wouldn't mean shit to a man in cahoots with God. Would it?

You can see the chaplain working it out. If he says no thanks, Flanagan will have him. Or, worse, he might even get on the outer with God.

If he's going to keep saving souls in this jail, he's got to take one of the cups. And the hell of it is, he better not flinch when he does it. All he can do now is reach for one of those cups and hope the hand of God puts his own hand on the right one.

At last he takes a drink. Then another. Looking at him you know yourself that if it was you, you'd want to put your mouth on the tiniest spot you could. But he can't even do that.

And suddenly we're all holding our breath, watching it. It's like a movie and they don't have the ceiling on the set and the camera zooms up out of the room, out of the building, out of the city. . .

Here's one man sitting in a roomful of men, in a building full of men, in a town full of men. The room is still, but the rest of the world is busy, no one else is watching. Here's a man sitting in a dingy little room, drinking coffee out of a plastic cup. . .

And you know. . . That little son of a gun polishes off the entire cup without flinching. It's prim. But he doesn't blink, and he doesn't wince. He drinks it down.

So now we're really on the edge of our chairs and the big question is just ringing through that room: Is God watching?

And finally the chaplain looks at Flanagan, and the chaplain looks at Snow, and you can see it. . . he's going to slide off his chair and lift his arms and call out to Jesus.

The chaplain looks at Flanagan and even Flanagan is on the edge of his chair. Flanagan is staring holes into the chaplain.

The chaplain swallows one last time. Then he looks at Snow and shuts his eyes. Then he stands. He leaves the circle. Looks up at the camera.

"Guard," he says. Then louder. "GUARD. Would you come in here, please? On the double."

The chaplain stands there with his back to us, facing the door.

Pretty soon the lock slams open on the steel door. The guard enters and the chaplain leaves without a word. The guard shuts the door behind him.

"What did you arseholes do to the chaplain?" the guard says.

A collective sigh runs around the room.

"I said: *WHAT DID YOU ARSEHOLES DO TO THE CHAPLAIN?*"

"Nothing," Flanagan says. "He just went to wash his mouth out."

"What?" the guard says.

"He's went to wash his mouth out," Flanagan says, "and it's a damn shame, too."

Flanagan looks at Snow. "Got to hand it to him, though, haven't you?" Flanagan shakes his head. "That little sonofabitch almost hung it out there, didn't he?" Flanagan sniffs and shakes his head again. "Damn shame. You know, if he'd just held on. . . well hell, I'd have got down there and prayed right with that kid."

Flanagan nods slowly to himself, then he smiles wryly, almost sadly, at Snow. "Yeah," he whispers. "It would have been a good experiment, wouldn't it?"

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CELLAR *(continued from page 60)*

The Grange hermitage is invariably drunk on the spot by the junkie who breaks into your house.

in there as well. Top of the range always has been a wall of Penfold's Grange hermitage. It is Australia's classic red. But as it is the one wine that invariably does well at auctions, and vast sums are also paid for the complete set of Grange years, I find that even the most ardent of cellarers merely put down a couple for curiosity's sake.

These are invariably drunk on the spot by the junkie who breaks into the house while you are at the boozer and makes off with all the portable electronic gear. So you never get to know what the stuff is going to taste like anyway.

At the moment the 1979 release sells at between $35 and $40 a bottle and for the trifling sum of $165 apiece you could buy a dozen or so of the 1966 release. In other words, it is a nice wine but forget it.

Three other wines almost come into this category. The Penfolds Bin 707 cabernet sauvignon ($20 a bottle but absolutely delicious) and St Henri claret (often called the poor man's Grange — the 1982 vintage going for around $15) are more than sound wines in that company's true style.

The third wine in this rarefied class is the very trendy West Australian, Cape Mentelle cabernet sauvignon, going for a snip around $18. It is a much admired red which, when I last drank it, had everything to be desired in a cabernet sauvignon, although it reminded me a little of iron fillings.

To use the double negative I don't say don't buy these wines and put them away for five or six years, but it is an awful lot of money to have hanging around the broom cupboard. Mind you, apart from discount sales, most well-made reds in their year of release are rarely found below $7-$8 a bottle unless you can get a discount for dozen lots, and many come between $10 and $12.

So within this range I always have had a soft spot for Wynns cabernet sauvignon from the Coonawarra region of South Australia. The Coonawarra produces some magnificent wines and I like the style of almost every one of them. The Wynns offering has always been outstanding in the class. The Coonawarra reds have a silkiness that seems to escape other wine regions, and while they can be drunk without worry in their year of release, most of them will take a further five or six years on the shelf without losing their character.

To the Wynns Coonawarra I would also add Seppelt's Premier Vineyard Selection, 1982 Coonawarra cabernet sauvignon. It is a light but very spicy wine. It is currently fashionable to state that these Coonawarra reds have a "minty" or "leafy" character. God knows why. It is just the way that winespeak is going. Anyway, in all the years that I have been drinking reds from the Coonawarra the mint sauce additive has escaped me, which probably shows that I'm either very non-trendy or thick in the palate.

To the above two I would also add another pair from the Coonawarra. The first is Lindemans Rouge Homme cabernet sauvignon claret. It normally retails around $10 but I've seen it marked down to $7 a bottle. Some people claim that compared to other Coonawarra reds, Rouge Homme sometimes comes over a bit on the thin side. I can't say I've noticed, but the vintages do definitely vary. The 1982 should hold up for at least four to five years more but if you can get it for $7 a bottle, why bother — treat it as the wine of the day.

The final Coonawarra offer as far as I am concerned is Redman's cabernet sauvignon. Once an independent Coonawarra winery, Redman is now controlled by Thomas Hardy. I mention this point because many

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of the small wineries that sprouted like noxious weeds in the late '50s to late '70s are no longer what they appear. Once the larger firms found out that small or boutique winery labels had considerable dinner table cachet, they did something about them — they bought the buggers out.

So when you buy a little treasure from Sam Smith's dill pickle, red wine and soda factory, pause a bit. Sam is probably only the front man — the real owner probably being an Alan Bond or a Yankee airline which in its turn is owned by the CIA.

Anyway the 1984 vintage which I tried proved that it doesn't matter who owns Redman. While excellent at the moment, this wine should keep for a minimum of another five years. I hesitate to say it's the best of the Coonawarra offerings, but certainly when I shared it a few months back over an excellent joint of roast hogget with all the trimmings it came out supremely well. It was indeed like silk, with a splendid bouquet.

And I judged it against a true Thomas Hardy & Sons red — the Eileen Hardy dry red 1982. At $15 a throw on release, the Eileen Hardy is claimed to be the pick of the company's line and is released only in the years when the vintage comes up to absolute scratch. It is a shiraz and cabernet sauvignon blend from the McLaren Vale, Coonawarra and Padthaway areas of South Australia and it is certainly beautifully made. However, the Redman did pip it to my mind.

Wolf Blass wines, despite their maker's wildly showbusiness approach to the trade (once frowned upon, now not only accepted but copied), are always worth while as long as you don't attempt to cellar them for too long. It is claimed by enemies of the man that they go off after a couple of years lying down, but I'd certainly give them much longer than that.

For cellaring purposes the black label cabernet shiraz blends are the best buy — the last one to have passed my palate being the 1981 vintage. The Blass wines have lots of wood in them, as they say in the trade, but this oak-wine marriage is usually a happy one. Once again some critics claim his wines have a "superb chocolate flavor". But I always seem to miss the chocolate in the same way that I miss the mint.

Two other red wines from a smallish South Australian family company, Henschke, whose vineyards are in the high Keyneton wine-growing region above the Barossa Valley, can be a bit difficult to find. The first is the incomparable and strictly limited Hill of Grace, which is superb, and the second is the more readily available Mt Edelstone. Incidentally both are sold under these names, so it's a bit hard to tell they are red until you pour them out! Henschke wines have a long shelf life and are well worth seeking out.

On the cheaper and gutsier side in South Australia, Chateau Reynella's standard vintage reserve claret, which at around $5 is a bargain, is a wine well worth keeping for a number of years. If you want to step up, the Reynella cabernet sauvignon is a long-keeping wine, but it is quite a tough little number. I tasted the 1982 vintage last up and I figured it had at least another five years on its side before flattening itself out properly. But it is not all that expensive and because of this is worth while putting down.

Turning to other states, there are any number of wines that are not only worth buying but keeping for a few years. So here are a gaggle of styles more or less at random.

In NSW, McWilliams with its Mount Pleasant premium series has always held my affection and the company's hermitage is invariably top of the list. The wine does vary from vintage to vintage but I've never drunk a bottle that has not failed to please me. Not inexpensive, but well worth laying down.

Another interesting red is the Huntington Estate cabernet sauvignon from the Mudgee region. Not widely sold, it nevertheless can be bought. Like a lot of NSW reds it is said to strive for a Bordeaux effect, which means that the wines are supposed to be on the Froggy side. I've always found them highly characteristic of Mudgee, which is a difficult wine-growing area because intense summer heat can at times turn the stuff quite blowsy...not the Huntington Estate wines mind you, but others in the area who should and shall remain nameless. Actually this is one Australian wine that I really would like to put away for 10 years just to see how it turns out.

The third NSW offering is Hungerford Hill's cabernet merlot, another wine that is said to be striving for the Bordeaux effect. The company's advertising is rather dotty... "behind every bottle there's a mystery, romance and a secret hoard of gold..." No there's not, you stupid bastards, it's just red wine. Besides which, unless it is in powder form, how in God's name are you going to get gold out of a bottle. I don't know why Hungerford Hill simply doesn't put a ship in a bottle and drown it in the wine. It would make about as much sense.

Anyway, the 1983 cabernet merlot is very much to my taste — a spicy red without being at all heavy, if I can stoop to a couple of wine terms for a moment.

Now for a couple from Victoria. Relatively recently, that state has adopted a wine authentication scheme, as a marketing device and also in an attempt to instil some regionalism into the Australian wine business where, at its most bizarre, a wine can be made from two grapes from Alice Springs, a handful from the Frankland River and a quart of something or other that was found in the back of a garage at Leeton.

Immediately a dreadful squabble broke out about a label that consists of a "penny black" representation of the late, lamented Queen Victoria wrapped around the neck of the bottle. I don't quite know what the row is about to this day. Squabbles in the wine trade are never-ending and basically are conducted with as much decorum as a bunch of fifth-formers loose on the school bus.

Anyway, some growers will stick the label on. Others will not. One large company that has entered the scheme is Seppelt. About the middle of last year they released a 1982 Victoria hermitage (shiraz) from grapes grown in Western Victoria. Now this is not one of those old-style Victorian shiraz offerings. They used to be so thick that, as one English titled lady said apropos of a cup of tea, "It was so strong that a mouse could trot upon it."

However, it has nice balance and retains some of that old inky charm that Victoria was once known for. I would hazard a guess that it would be good for a further five years in the bottle. It is relatively easy to obtain and I will watch further releases with interest.

The second wine that I would choose to lay down from that state would be a Chateau Tahbilk cabernet sauvignon. It is one of those really old-fashioned Victorian reds, the flavor of which can be quite startling in this day of washed-out wines. It seems to be all wrong and yet it is all right. It is worth a further eight years in the bottle. The 1981 shiraz from that company is also a blockbuster. Great wines.

Finally a couple of cheapies: everyday drinking wine but a year on their side won't do them any harm. Taylors hermitage, which seems to be on permanent discount at around $5, is an extremely pleasant shiraz. The winery is on the edge of the Clare in South Australia and I've always had a soft spot for the reds from that area. The other is a Penfold's standard flag-carrying red — Koonunga Hill. Like most wines they now carry a vintage year as a matter of course. They'll fine up in the bottle a little, but it won't do any harm if you make a dreadful mistake and attack the cellar in a moment of pure emotion.

No one much cellars whites in this country, mainly because they are treated as wines of the moment. Lindemans used to keep its really good Hunter Valley white wines back for special release, but the company threw a lot of them on to the market last year. The price was more than fairly reasonable and wine lovers had a fun time at the company's expense.

Most other firms have always been cautious about cellaring advice on whites — speaking in time spans of two to three years. But now that chardonnay has become the buzz white to the point of boredom there is perhaps some sense in putting a dozen away for a few years.

A young chardonnay, as distinct from the standard drinking riesling in this country, can be a very blowsy wine when it is young. Because it is a full-flavored white wine, under the name of white burgundy, it was more or less known as the red drinker's white wine. This is why Houghton's white burgundy from Western Australia has long been favored by macho drinkers of both sexes. And a very good white wine it is too.

Some months back I also had a bottle of wood-aged chenin blanc (1983) from that company and I must confess, to use the words of the immortal Dr Johnson (although he was actually talking about Scotch broth), I don't care how soon I drink it again. I might also add it would marry excellently with a bowl of Scotch broth. It is a very full white with a distinct and underlying honey sweetness. And yet it was not at all sweet in the sense of jelly babies. It would certainly last for up to three years in the cellar.

For those of you with a Queensland taste, the Robinson Family Ballandean chardonnay 1985 is also worth while putting down. When I tested it it did seem a little fat (all that Queensland heat you know), but it should keep very well.

For something completely different, also look out for a Seppelt Drumborg rhine riesling. The company is going to hate me for saying this but it reminded me very much of an Italian white of which I am inordinately fond. Corvo white to be precise. As Corvo is a Sicilian white, what

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this means about the future of Seppelt's Drumborg rhine riesling is anyone's guess. Both, interestingly enough, have little smell or nose, and have an underlying brandy finish.

Anyway, the company itself, following a number of years growing grapes in this part of Victoria, noted that one of its vintages showed "no evidence of the 'toastiness' or 'kerosene character' traditionally associated with aged Australian rhine rieslings". And thank Christ for that, say I. This particular riesling would have a possible cellar life of around seven to eight years.

And now an expensive lie-down. The College winery in Wagga, which is attached to the selfsame institution's school for booze makers, has always prided itself on the quality of its wines. That pride also runs to whopping prices. I believe this is more than a bit stiff as the bloody things are made on taxpayer's money (and there's one in the eye for taxpaying teetotallers). However...

Any of the College Cowra chardonnay wines that are available are worth keeping for a few years if you can afford anything from $17 to $25 a bottle for the stuff. They also produce cheaper blended chardonnay around $6 a bottle which also can stand some ageing.

A final white that I'd put away for a while, mainly because I like its crisp taste, is Wynns Coonawarra Estate rhine riesling. The 1985 vintage is of more than average quality; a no-nonsense wine, in other words.

This group of dry red and white wines is just a tiny selection of what's available throughout the country. The choice in fact is bloody bewildering. But thanks to discounting of many lines you can build up a cellar reasonably cheaply. And you don't *have* to buy the wines in dozen lots (although it is usually cheaper to do so). A "cellar" can consist of a mere dozen or so individual bottles put aside for sheer interest with a minimum of fuss.

The thing *not* to do is rush out and buy 12 dozen at random. You will find your tastes will change as much as that of some of the wines.

And beware the shouted blandishments of the advertisements. In many cases huge ads for a particular wine style mean that someone down there in the wine boiler room has made a bum decision and so they have got to shift a lot of rubbish fast. Just because some silly tit of a girl is seen drinking Chateau Plonk on Bondi Beach topless does not necessarily make the stuff palatable. So have the courage to go your own way. Because in the main, the contents of your cellar are eventually going to go down *your* throat. In other words if you can't hack it, don't stack it!

Having said all that, I'm now going to have a glass or 15 of cask washing wine to get the taste of all those vintages out of my mouth.

RICHIE *(continued from page 34)*

Don't listen to what people say about me nowadays. Lionel Richie did not make it by himself.

I'll give it to Kenny Rogers."

PLAYBOY: But you'd been together *15* years. Wasn't there some way to talk to them, to reconcile?

RICHIE: I didn't know what to do. I agonised for months over giving away *Lady*, but after 15 years of playing on the team, I didn't think I needed to prove I was one of the guys.

PLAYBOY: Okay. Next came *Endless Love.*

RICHIE: A magical moment. Diana Ross was a star when I was still in high school and even though we knew each other in 1980 when we recorded the song, it wasn't until after the session that we really got to be friends. She loved the song. I couldn't come to New York and she couldn't come to California, so we met in Reno, Nevada, at 1am and by 4.30 we had history on tape.

PLAYBOY: What did it do for her career?

RICHIE: I think it was her biggest hit and an all-time record seller at Motown.

PLAYBOY: And your career?

RICHIE: Well, Kenny Rogers singing *Lady* and telling everyone I wrote the song was the beginning for me; but there was really no face on the record. It was Kenny's all the way. But with *Endless Love,* I'm on the screen singing with Diana — the first time the public really got to see my face. People started to buzz that maybe he really will go solo.

PLAYBOY: What did the Commodores say?

RICHIE: They said, "We do Commodore albums — not Diana Ross/Lionel Richie duet trips." I couldn't believe their pettiness. I didn't realise that composing *Lady* and *Endless Love* was the best thing that could have happened for me.

PLAYBOY: In terms of your becoming a solo artist?

RICHIE: Yes, but at the time I wasn't confident about going solo. My God, the idea terrified me. I was petrified to stand out there and take the rap, all the criticism and flak. It was just so much easier to perform as a group. So I told them I wasn't going any place. But they kept saying, "No, you're leaving, you're leaving any day now."

PLAYBOY: What was the final straw?

RICHIE: I couldn't take the pressure. The press would review the group and end up just writing about me. It was like pouring gasoline on a fire. I finally said, "Screw it. Let it go." I remember standing up in a room one day with the Commodores and crying. I pleaded with them: "Guys, I'm not leaving." In fact, the rumors of me leaving weren't coming from *me,* but from the Commodores themselves. They *wanted me to get out* but just didn't want to say it. That hurt me a lot, I can tell you.

PLAYBOY: Didn't any of the Commodores take your side?

RICHIE: No. They were threatened, bottled up with their own frustrations, and their fear of the unknown. What really got me was that I expected the fibre of love between us to surface — for someone to come to me and say: "I love you and I'm going to fight for you." But I never got the phone call. The key word is loss.

PLAYBOY: What did Brenda say to you at the time?

RICHIE: She was just trying to hold me together. She'd say: "I didn't get you into the Commodores, so I'm not going to be the one to get you out." But the split came anyway.

PLAYBOY: Regrets?

RICHIE: I don't blame those guys. We were both being petty, both picking on one another. When you spend 15 years waking up with the same guys and going to bed every night with them, it's sad to lose them. To be honest with you, I miss them a lot. What makes groups so wonderful is that when you win, you know who's going to be at the party, and when you lose, you take heart. Camaraderie. It's a cushion. I'm a group player.

And don't listen to what people say about me nowadays. Lionel Richie did *not* make it by himself. I'll say that now. The Commodores are a part of me and I lost them.

PLAYBOY: In 1981, you chose Kenny Rogers' manager, Ken Kragen, to launch your solo career. Not what we'd call a likely pair.

RICHIE: Ken was a kid brought up in Berkeley, an environment as sheltered as Tuskegee — and he didn't know *anything* about the black community. It took me three months to give him a brief history of the black experience so he could understand he couldn't manage me Kenny Rogers-style. I tried to explain to him certain things are just not said or done: for example, when Richard Pryor or a black mayor would call Ken's office to speak to me, Ken would automatically say: "Lionel's not available for comment; he'll get back to you." In the black world, that means *screw you!* Now we work together well. I don't want a hip manager, a guy to sit down and say: "Okay, baby, I heard the record, it sounds great *but...* " No. Ken says: "You give me something to sell and I'll sell it for you." The creative part is mine.

PLAYBOY: But didn't Kragen face *any* obstacles getting you crossed over from the black to white airwaves?

RICHIE: No. I'd love to sit here and say we had the biggest strategy of life and that Kragen masterminded my crossover. But that's not how it happened. I walked in the door of Kragen & Company with *Endless Love,* seven Grammy nominations, an Oscar nomination, and 15 years with the Commodores. I was not Kenny Rogers, but I had some credentials. Still, nobody knew my face.

PLAYBOY: Kragen certainly remedied that.

RICHIE: Pepsi helped. "Do this commercial," he said. Pepsi is a hungry company. They said: "How would you like to be presented?" How? At the end of every basketball game. At the end of every cartoon. At the end of every Saturday afternoon. What we had wasn't a commercial but a glorified video of *Running With The Night.* Instead of the video running on MTV, we had it running on prime time television.

PLAYBOY: Did you ever expect USA For Africa or the song *We Are The World* would become such mammoth successes?

RICHIE: Never. I remember saying to Kragen: "This year, I want to get involved in a charity that will help Africans who have nothing to eat. I'll write a song." Then I was talking to Quincy and he said: "I was talking to Harry (Belafonte) and, you know, Michael would like to do something like that... " Next thing I know, *We Are The World.*

PLAYBOY: What about the recording session sticks in your mind?

RICHIE: I'll never forget standing at the studio door and watching Diana Ross, Michael Jackson, Billy Joel, Bob Dylan, Springsteen, Steve Perry, Hall and Oates — everybody coming together. But suddenly Ray Charles walked in and *all of us were in awe.* Suddenly, we were null and void. It was also wonderful when those two Ethiopian ladies walked in and said: "Before you all get started, we want to thank you for saving our country." That also put us in our place.

PLAYBOY: Also there were the Commodores — personally invited by you — but not in the actual recording studio. Why were they kept away from the microphones?

RICHIE: My inviting the Commodores was sincere, but the doors were slammed after 45 artists were in the studio. Remember now: there were two rooms, one had *all* the celebrities in it — people like Sydney Poitier who weren't recording — and the other had the 45. I didn't have a lot of time to go out and find out what was happening with the Commodores. I'm sure they wanted to record with us, but the trick was: I couldn't get them in.

PLAYBOY: *You* — who wrote the song and organised the session — couldn't get them in?

RICHIE: Remember now: our reconciliation hadn't yet started and we weren't on the greatest of terms. So just for me to say "Hey, guys, I'd like you to come down" felt a little awkward to me — because I didn't

know how they felt about me. But as far as my being in the best of their graces, I wasn't. I did the best I could under the circumstances.

PLAYBOY: Why, in photos and videos since that time, does it seem as if your skin has become whiter and your skin tones lighter? Even your music seems whiter. Business decisions?

RICHIE: Absolutely. But look at Leontyne Price: she wouldn't have a shot at being recognised by the black community; she never uttered a funky phrase in her whole career and I can name you black classical conductors — like William L. Dawson — or ballet dancers, same thing. The point being: why, all of a sudden, when we get down to rock'n'roll or contemporary music performers, do critics start talking about my straight hair or white music? You mean to tell me that's all you expect from a black person?

PLAYBOY: We're talking about image.

RICHIE: Well, let me tell you: the Afro is gone because I can no longer maintain that much hair on my head. But when I look back at pictures taken with the Commodores, I see the greatest looking cat in the whole world. Everybody had Afros out to here — and if you had five cats in a car that was a real crowd. Everybody walked down the street in those dancin' platform shoes. Now when I think about it, I say: "My God, how could I have looked like that?" Nowadays, I can experiment as a solo performer: I like the idea of being uptown, downtown, and in between.

PLAYBOY: Does Kragen call the shots, though?

RICHIE: Show me a great general and I'll show you a great army. Although Brenda is my rock, when it comes to management, Kragen is wonderful. I mean, this guy can build you up and make you feel like you're going to take over the world. You have to be pumped up when 2.6 billion people are watching and after a coaching session with him it's: "Thank you very much, Kragen, I'm ready to go." In fact, three years later, I went into his office and said: "I think you can slow down now." Fame is an amazing thing, it can drive you nuts. Final conclusion: he's done a great job.

PLAYBOY: Then why, last February, at the all-time height of your record-and-concert-selling power, did Kragen virtually fire you?

RICHIE: How do I say it kindly? Ken was bottled up with creative frustration and wanted something meaningful to do with his life. Hands Across America was it. He wanted to make a statement; so I said: "Fine, go ahead and do it."

PLAYBOY: What did he do?

RICHIE: He made one of the greatest errors of life called: *Memo Off My Desk.* He began by announcing to the *LA Times* that the two of us were going our separate ways. He told me: "Lionel, I can't handle the workload that you and Kenny (Rogers) bring in," and didn't want to do anything to jeopardise my career by committing himself so fully to Hands.

PLAYBOY: Kragen fired a third of his creative department — everyone working on your behalf?

RICHIE: That's right. He panicked. I won't use the word "maniac", but it takes sizable balls — chutzpah — to put your arse on the line. One reason he could afford to do it was thanks to me. I even appreciated his being up-front: most cats hustle you for cash — but he wasn't coming from that angle. Still, I told him: "Ken, Hands is a charity, which means it's going to happen and going to end May 25, 1986. You don't have to make this decision." But he said: "Goodbye, Lionel."

PLAYBOY: Isn't that a bit like the servant firing the king?

RICHIE: Fame is a terrifying animal. If you're not used to the spotlight shining in your face, it will affect you in strange ways. Right after the announcement hit, he regretted it, called me up and said: "My God, what happened?"

PLAYBOY: Didn't you consider finding another manager?

RICHIE: I never thought for a moment Ken wasn't coming back to me. I've seen lawyers handle major clients who are used to telling them: "Fuck you." They don't expect to lose that client — until they do. They don't realise that their power was in who they were managing.

PLAYBOY: How did you both patch the relationship up?

RICHIE: It was a very simple phone call. He said: "Do you think we can work something out?" I said: "Fine."

PLAYBOY: What did you work out?

RICHIE: Nothing. It's called business as usual. I dreaded the idea of starting over again and learning a new manager. We had just ironed out three years of kinks.

PLAYBOY: Why do you think women find you sexy?

RICHIE: There's two kinds of guys: the hulk-hunk like Stallone or Tom Selleck, and the Woody Allen type — the average guy with some personality and wit. That's me. I was the guy who couldn't tell a girl face to face I loved her. In high school I was out of it. I would have loved to have been the lover of life back then, but it was slow motion. I was the awkward duckling — just couldn't figure out a formula that worked. But about my junior or senior year, it started clicking into gear.

PLAYBOY: So you were a wild man in college.

RICHIE: I was a wild *and* crazy man when it came down to parties and hanging out, but forget the crap about "The Lover". The Commodores nicknamed me: "Holdin' hands, makin' all kinds of plans," because "Come on back to my hotel room" were words that wouldn't come out of my mouth. But all I had to do was sing three notes and women were suddenly dropping their skirts.

PLAYBOY: Were you tempted by all of this?

RICHIE: I burned out on it. I realised there were real-life things called paternity suits. I was horny all day long, but usually went back to my room alone.

PLAYBOY: So, nowadays, when women in your audiences throw themselves at you —

RICHIE: I absorb it. I don't deny it. I take it in, because it's a wonderful feeling to be loved. On the stage, it's like making love to 20,000 people.

PLAYBOY: What if a woman wants to come backstage?

RICHIE: Then she's in trouble, because I go out the back door. There's only one of me and I've already gone through the period when I wanted to make love to the whole world.

PLAYBOY: And when you're compared to names like Cole Porter, Paul McCartney, John Lennon or Irving Berlin, what do you think?

RICHIE: One night recently, I had a guilt conversation with Tina Turner. She said: "You know, for the longest time, Lionel, I felt guilty about living like a queen." But then she began to think about all those years of non-stop gigging — the hard-core gig. And she said: "You know what? I deserve it." I definitely put the time in, too, dedicated 18 years of my life getting exactly where I am, and I'm not going to make excuses about the success. Tina and I worked hard for what we've got.

PLAYBOY: You don't worry about your career coasting downhill?

RICHIE: The terror to me is not being without dollars. I went through years of having very little money and feeling the fear of poverty. On a bad day, I can still get a three-piece group together and go play at the Holiday Inn.

PLAYBOY: Assuming that won't be necessary, what's the next challenge in your career?

RICHIE: Motion pictures, definitely. I wouldn't be so presumptuous to say I demand a leading role... da, da, da... but I'd like to approach a film career in the right way — like Cher did. Cher didn't want an audience spending two hours watching just her in her first movie; she came in with an established actor who could take some weight off her.

PLAYBOY: Where do you see yourself in 20 years when you're 57?

RICHIE: On the moon. Or wherever. I hope the key word is happy. I still feel I'm in the achievement years, when I'm laying the foundation for my future. What I'm really doing is putting together my insurance policy to play *with* and *in* life *later*. I want to make sure that, when I'm 50 or 60, I can indeed come out of my house and play with life rather than being victimised by it. I've heard so many horror stories about people who had their moment, killed it, and wore themselves out. So what's happiness?

SEX

Leading sexologist Bettina Arndt brings you the latest sex news and views.

Being a female you may do this yourself and would therefore know the answer to my question. In a book I once read how some women can cross their legs and by squeezing together or rocking, can actually achieve orgasm.

At school and now at university I have observed a lot of girls, when reading or in the class, cross their legs and swing a leg gently up and down or in a circular motion for a whole lecture. I have also seen this on the bus and train, and it seems to be more frequent among young women.

I sometimes wonder whether they are actually aware of what they are doing or whether it is purely an unconscious act that takes place because it feels good. I know it must work because sometimes a girl in tight faded jeans will get up and the vaginal area is quite obviously damp.

— L.W., WA.

Oh, dear! You are having such a lovely time watching us all and indulging in your fantasies. I hate to disillusion you but we're not all bringing ourselves off whenever we cross our legs or swing them up and down. Wouldn't it be wonderful if it were all so easy? I'd never be bored in a lecture again! Some very rare women *are* able to reach orgasm by simply squeezing their thighs or rocking but even then we usually need to be in just the right mood with a wonderful fantasy to really light our fire for us. For most women it takes much more time and effort to become aroused, let alone to reach orgasm. But that doesn't mean it doesn't feel nice to swing our legs occasionally — it's really just one of those odd little habits, like twiddling one's hair or moustache, nothing particularly sexy about it. And it's probably also good for the circulation!

As for those damp jeans — yes, wet jeans can be due to sexual arousal and sexual lubrication. But, I hate to admit it, women also do sweat, particularly in confined, damp areas of our bodies. What's more, we also produce a discharge or secretion, designed to keep the vagina nice and healthy through a self-cleaning mechanism. So what you may be observing on those tantalising jeans may be plain everyday secretion, or worse, a vaginal discharge resulting from infection. The sad truth is that tight jeans make it far more likely that that normal discharge does contain a vaginal infection — unhealthy bacteria breed most easily when the moist vagina is locked away in tight clothing without air circulating to give it breathing space. See, the truth is far less exciting than your wonderful fantasies, but keep watching: you never know, some of us may sometimes be doing just what you hope and imagine.

I am desperate for some sort of reassurance that I am not totally warped. I have been not daring to tell anyone because I feel so ashamed and confused.

When I masturbate, just before I reach climax, my mother's face comes into the fantasy and I cannot get rid of it. She is not in the actual fantasy and I do not feel the least bit sexually attracted to her at other times. I get so afraid that she will appear every time I masturbate and now I can't get her out of my mind. It's awful and it's ruining our relationship as mother and daughter as I feel

afraid she can somehow tell what's happening to me. I am 21 years old and live alone with my mother as I have a slight physical ailment.

This problem is driving me to sleepless nights, uncontrollable shyness and suicidal thoughts.

— M.F., SA.

I have encountered people who have been haunted by similar images during masturbation — memories of mothers punishing them for touching themselves, voices saying "don't touch" and so on but it's rarer for a specific association to occur between orgasm and an image such as a mother's face. I assume the connection is probably some left-over guilt about masturbation rather than, as you seem to be assuming, a sexual attraction toward your mother. If you are not aware of any attraction toward her I'm sure you need have no fears in that regard, nor should you assume that anyone else you told would reach that conclusion. Since it seems to be having such an effect on your life and on your relationship with mother, I feel it would be a good idea to talk to a counsellor about the problem. If you will contact me again I will suggest a behavior therapist specialising in sex therapy. The therapist will, I am sure, be able to help you find ways of eliminating the guilt (assuming that's what is causing the problem) and help you find more appropriate fantasies to enjoy during masturbation. Please do not let this matter haunt you and cause so much distress. It really is not as foreboding as you seem to imagine.

I feel the thrust of sex between loving couples should be good, clean fun, and for that I say hooray and wish it were so between my wife and me, but unfortunately she seems to see it as an ordeal and the very idea of it causes a mental shutter to roll down which precludes any good, clean fun except on very odd occasions. I must add that when she does approach it in this positive frame of mind, she is terrific and we both enjoy it. But for some reason this does not spur her on to do the same thing next time and it may be anything from three to eight weeks before we next make love. The prospect of an uneasy ordeal is always the most likely outcome, which is hopelessly unsatisfying for both of us and then, of course, we are back to square one and complete negativity again.

She is certainly not frigid, she can orgasm (although it is rare), she can give and get a good time. It seems to be desire that she lacks; the problem is I don't seem to be able to figure out what I can do to stimulate desire and as a result we make love very rarely (never more than once a month) and I am terribly frustrated.

I must point out we love each other very much. We have been married for eight years; I am 32 and she is 31. We have two beautiful boys whom we both adore. Generally I would say our relationship is excellent — we love and respect each other and our marriage is a very good one. Because of this I find her lack of desire for me so hard to accept.

I have never played around with other women, but I guess I have reached a point of such frustration and desire for intimacy and a woman's touch that I am afraid the next time an opportunity presents itself, I might take it.

If she were frigid and couldn't enjoy making love I would at least understand, but because she can enjoy it, I can't fathom her lack of desire for me. She will not even entertain the idea of

counselling or professional advice or help.

—F.W., ACT.

Your letter illustrates one of the great ironies about sexuality within a relationship. Sex *is* trivial: it isn't such an important part of the total relationship between a husband and wife, not compared to other things such as love, trust and mutual respect. When sex is good, it matters very little. But when one person is yearning for sexual warmth, and feels rejected by his/her partner's lack of desire, then sexuality can loom very large in the relationship. The sad thing is that, in those circumstances, tension over sex can poison the best of relationships.

It is so sad not to feel wanted and not be able to even talk about something which is causing you so much pain. The fact your wife is unwilling to seek counselling makes the situation far more difficult to deal with; however, lack of desire *is* one of the most difficult sexual problems to treat. We really don't know all that much about why some people are more sensual than others.

Obviously we would expect there to be a natural variation in people's basic libido. But, in your wife's case, the fact she reacts so aggressively to any discussion of the topic suggests there may be some more complex psychological reason why her desire should wax and wane. It is quite likely that she has no idea why she reacts as she does, she knows how much she is hurting you and feels guilty about it, and her feelings of confusion and anxiety are expressed through hostility. It is easier for her to feel angry at you and to regard your interest in sex as unreasonable than it is to explore her attitudes. Maybe it would be worth writing her a letter. She won't let you talk about it but she would probably read what you have to say. A careful letter would enable you to explain the difference between sexual desire and your need for intimacy and closeness, and your desire to feel wanted by her. In writing down your feelings you will have some hope that she will begin to understand what is happening between you and it may just possibly break down some of the mounting tension. Perhaps you could even suggest she write down something for you about her reactions to your letter.

Apart from that you must keep plugging away, showing her how much you love her, enjoying the good things between you, relishing the happy times and just hope that gradually her feelings may change. Many women do blossom sexually as they grow older and thereby manage to overcome some of the inhibitions and resistances which may have lowered sexual desire earlier in their lives. Hang in there; obviously she loves and appreciates you, even though something is preventing her from showing it in the way you would like.

T*wo years ago I was divorced and since then I have been very friendly with a terrific man I met just prior to separation. He is everything I could wish for, only there is one drawback. I was brought up very strictly and even though I had three kids, my sexual experience was very limited for 21 years of marriage. My friend says that at our age (forties) a certain amount of stimulation is necessary in the way of erotic movies and so on. I'm afraid I can't see where love comes into them. I believe that the sex act is purely for two people who love each other, not as one-night stands. I want to please my man as he is a fantastic lover and want to give him everything back in return for what he has given me. Is there anything wrong with watching these films or is it just me? It is the only problem really that we have apart from his wanting me to make the moves sometimes. I do find it hard and realise I have to change my attitude.*

—F.L., Qld.

Well, there is certainly nothing wrong with sex movies but many women, like you, do find that most of the ones available do nothing for them at all. The trouble is most are made by males and focus on the aspects of sexuality which men rather than women tend to find erotic. Hence you find endless

shots of enormous penises plunging into various parts of the female anatomy taken from every conceivable angle with little or no plot, unattractive actors and vulgar sets. Often it's enough to put most of us off altogether or alternatively send us off into gales of laughter. So don't worry if you find porn movies hard to take; they certainly haven't got much to do with love.

But that doesn't mean it isn't worth trying occasionally to find something a little better — there are some worth seeing. You could also think about the possibility of making your own. Have you ever thought about hiring a video camera and setting it up to tape yourselves making love? It's lots of fun and can be very sexy as well. I'm sure your partner would be delighted if you were to suggest something like that.

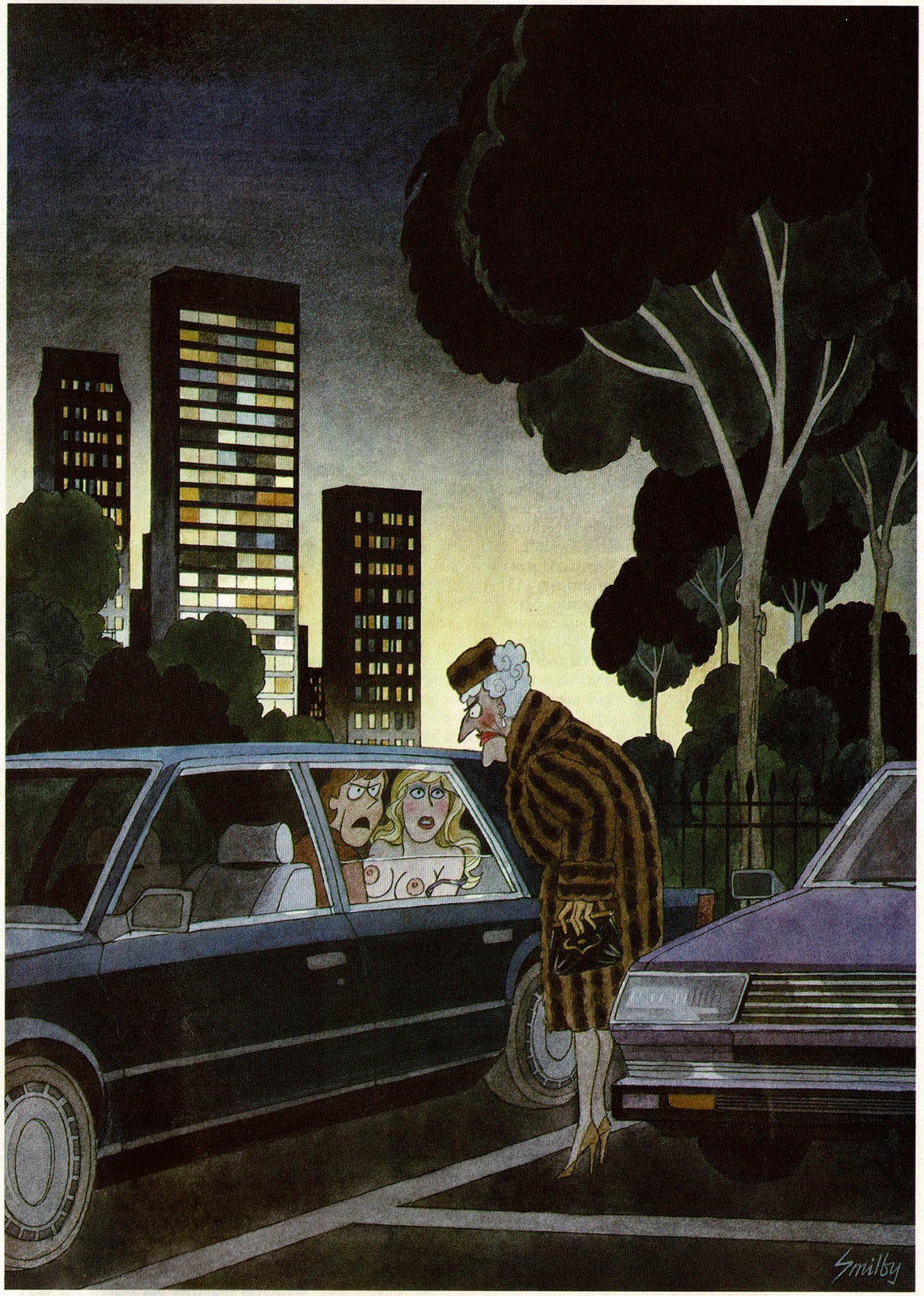
Men do get very fed up with always being the ones to have to initiate sexual activity. I know it's embarrassing to make the first move but I'm sure you would find it gets easier as you learn to feel more comfortable. It may also help you to read some books. I'd suggest *How To Make Love To A Man* or *The Sensuous Woman*. These books are designed to make women less inhibited and are full of good ideas you can try out on your man (like covering him with whipped cream and licking it off) or ringing him up at work and telling him what you plan to do to him when he gets home. Believe me, the ideas sound crazy but once you get the hang of it there'll be no stopping you. . . or him!

A*t 27, I am still a virgin. Although I have tried to have intercourse a couple of times with different women I have never succeeded and now I am starting to believe I may be gay. On the occasions I have tried to have intercourse everything has been running smoothly while the lady and I have been stimulating and caressing each other still dressed, but as soon as I realise intercourse is imminent I lose my erection and no matter what we try I cannot regain it again. My father has told me on occasions he believes I am gay. At first I laughed at it but now I am starting to believe he may be right and that is why I can't lose my virginity.*

My main problem is I have no one to talk to or get advice from. I cannot talk to my parents or a friend as I am scared of what they will think. Also I cannot talk to my local doctor and ask for advice or for somewhere to go for it as my mother works for him. This is really starting to worry me so I am writing to you to see what you suggest.

—R.B., NSW.

In your situation it is hardly likely that the loss of an erection could indicate you are homosexual. Most heterosexual men have trouble having erections in *some* circumstances and it has nothing to do with homosexual inclinations. For a man to have an erection, he has to feel aroused and relaxed and then his body will work as it should. The presence of tension or anxiety inhibits this natural response and the more you worry and will yourself to have an erection, the less likely it is to happen. You seem now to be using your encounters with women to test yourself to see if you can perform — and hence prove you aren't gay. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising your penis doesn't rise to attention. Penises don't like being put under this type of pressure. I cannot understand why your father should have suggested you are homosexual. Perhaps he felt you weren't behaving in a sufficiently "masculine" fashion but, as I am sure you know, there are plenty of muscle-bound, football-playing homosexual men and just as many effeminate, sports-hating 100 percent heterosexual men. You can't predict homosexuality from the way a person behaves, the way he or she looks, or his/her personality. It is your fantasies, dreams and



"Yeah? Well I think wearing skins of slaughtered animals is disgusting."

NEXT MONTH

AUSTRALIAN PLAYBOY HITS A CENTURY: WE CELEBRATE OUR FIRST **100 ISSUES.**

ANIMAL LOVERS: BIRDS DO IT, BEES DO IT. . . IN FACT, THE WHOLE ANIMAL KINGDOM IS AT IT.

PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: BUSINESS MOGUL **BOB ANSETT** DRIVES HIS CAREER FURTHER.

ADVENTUROUS ANNA: ON THE MOVE WITH MISS MAY, THE TRAVEL AGENT'S BEST FRIEND.

RESORT REPORT: PLAYBOY PICKS THE WORLD'S BEST DROPOUT SPOTS.

desires which are most likely to reveal homosexual inclination. You do not mention ever being sexually attracted to men, ever fantasising or dreaming about a male, and in the absence of such thoughts or feelings, it is ludicrous to assume your difficulties with women have anything to do with homosexuality. I think you are suffering from an overdose of nerves plus a dose of an interfering dad. What you need to do is find a relationship where you feel sufficiently relaxed to talk to the lady concerned about what's been happening to you and let her help you calm down and learn to enjoy yourself. When you are with her, you should try to avoid intercourse for a while, learn to enjoy making love to her with your hands and lips, and when your penis knows it really isn't needed, then you will find it will be eager to get in on the action.

LASER TREATMENT

"Lasers Melt Frigid Women." It was a headline in a recent magazine reporting on the work of Dr Jacques Waynberg, director of the Institute of Sexology in Paris, France. In the past few months Dr Waynberg has been experimenting with the use of lasers to treat women who have never reached orgasm. Out of a total of 20 women treated in this way, 13 reported improved sexual response. Six were able to reach orgasm through masturbation and seven others, who had previously experienced pain when stimulated sexually, now reported pleasurable sensations. Waynberg believes that girls who learn to become orgasmic early in life, by age five, acquire a pleasure reflex which involves increased blood flow to the pelvis, especially the genitals, and the skin of the clitoris. The pleasure reflex can be easily inhibited during childhood or adolescence, when the awakening of the body is thwarted by taboos or psychological problems.

Waynberg believes this reflex can be relearned through masturbation training, and then after a while it becomes a conditioned reflex, so that when a woman becomes sexually aroused the blood will automatically flow to the genital area. If this training is lacking, orgasm is almost impossible. There is a group of women for whom clitoral stimulation is painful, and who never experience any sexual pleasure. Waynberg feels that in this case the conditioned reflex has never been acquired, and the arteries in the genitals simply don't open up.

The laser experiments are designed to see if it is possible to create blood flow to the genitals artificially. Waynberg uses an infra-red laser treatment, applying the laser to the genital area for a few minutes, three times a week for six to eight weeks. This treatment is combined with masturbation. Waynberg found that within three to four weeks the women reported the pain had disappeared and pleasurable sensations started to appear.

LUSTY WOMEN HALT MALE DECLINE

The longer a couple is married the less frequently they have sex. That certainly used to be the case, at least when Kinsey was around. But now a funny thing is happening. According to sociologist Ghuillermina Jasso of the University of Minnesota, in Minneapolis, the natural tendency for couples to be less interested in sex as they age is now being countered by a trend for women to grow more lustful — inspiring their reluctant husbands to keep up the pace. Jasso has analysed various factors affecting marital coital frequency to discover what is causing the recent trend for sexual frequency to increase rather than decrease with years of marriage. (Current US patterns show that after an initial drop in the first two years, the post-honeymoon effect, marital coital frequency shows a continual upward climb.)

Jasso concluded that in part the change is due to cultural factors which now encourage sexual activity for people of all ages. Men still show some decrease in sexual activity as they age, but there is now such a strong trend for women to show increasing activity as they grow older that the overall effect is for couples to have more sex as they move into middle and old age.

MUSIC LOVERS

A musical vibrator? I'd heard about it but was never sure whether it was real or a joke. Now I have discovered it actually exists, but according to the consumer reports it still contains a few design flaws. However, for the music buff, it may add a little lift to your lovemaking. The musical vibrator is a phallic-shaped device connected to a control box which includes a microphone, an intensity or volume control and a switch which could be set up to provide constant stimulation or to pick up the sound from the microphone and provide rhythmic stimulation.

It apparently works quite well. The microphone picks up the beat of the music and provides a vibration which varies from intense and rapid (in response to loud, strong sounds) to no vibration at all (during pauses in the music or very soft sounds). So along with the rise and fall in the music you have a rise and fall in stimulation. As you might imagine, this can prove rather frustrating if the beat goes off just as you are turning on. As an erotic teasing device it's not bad but when you have had enough and want to get on with things there's a further problem... getting to the control box which has to be located next to the speakers of your stereo.

Please address your letters requesting advice or giving accounts of sexual experiences to Bettina Arndt at the following address: c/- Australian PLAYBOY, P.O. Box 746, Darlinghurst, 2010. Bettina welcomes inquiries but regrets she can't always reply to each reader individually.

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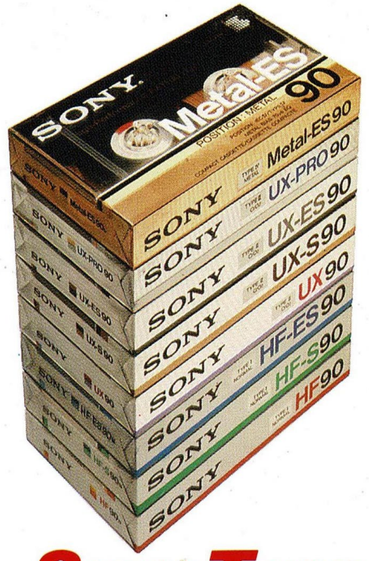

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